

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN A

NOBLEMAN AND A FARMER,

UPON THE

Reduction of the National Debt,
And other Affairs of State :

A L S O,

The distressed condition of the Farmers
in Scotland, considered ; with the pro-
bable means of their relief, and their
Landlords advantage ;—

A N D

A more effectual Method than any hitherto, for
suppressing Vice and Immorality, and encourag-
ing of Religion and Virtue.—The whole calcu-
lated exceedingly to promote the Prosperity and
Grandeur of the British Nation.

By WILLIAM SUTTON *a Native of Banff.*

Righteousness exalteth a Nation.

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To the Right Honourable

The Lords and Commons of Great Britain.

Most Noble and Illustrious Senate,

WERE it possible to point out to your Lordships any society of persons in Great Britain, of such consequence to their Country, as, under due and proper encouragement, could be rendered both able and willing to clear this oppressed State of the cumberous load of 280 millions in the space of 35 years; and, not only so, but to uphold by pension a numerous and powerful Army,—an Army not inadequate to the Majesty of the British Empire, without the least oppression to themselves or the people, but rather bearing deliverance from the same, without the least infringement of the present Revenues or Fortunes of the Nobility, &c. and attended with many other salutary effects not here mentioned, what impiety were it once to question, Whether the *wisdom, justice, and goodness* of Parliament, would not take the most special concern, to grant such encouragement as may be needful to carry such measures into execution.—Pardon me then, most illustrious Lords, if warmest loyalty to the best of Sovereigns,—fervent love to my native Country,—earnest desire of her deliverance from oppression,—and even mine own rescue in the general deliverance, who has long waded in the deeps of adversity:—If I have implored your Lordships notice of this system, Whether should the oppressed fly but to the powerful protection of that illustrious House, whose grand origin and design is
to

to save the people from rapine and oppression within, and from the violence of enemies without.

When I consider the highly exalted dignity of this great and illustrious House, I am confounded and abashed to the lowest possible degree, to present the thoughts of my nothingness and insignificance; but when I consider the amazing and infinite advantages that might attend some such measures, not only to the parties chiefly concerned, but to the whole State at large, I am encouraged to creep forward from my obscurity, though with a trembling hand, to present the rude materials of my indigested thoughts, which yet your Lordships consummate and princely wisdoms may polish up and form into a fair and beauteous system.

May that God, by whom Kings reign and Princes decree justice, bless your Lordships with many, and happy days,—may His Grace enable your Lordships so to use your great powers on earth, that when death shall receive the high commission to strip your princely heads of all their honours here,—may Crowns of Glory await you, that shall never fade away.—I have the honour to be,

Most illustrious Senate,

Your most devoted,

And very humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

To the Right Honourable

WILLIAM PITT,

First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury.

Most Illustrious Sir,

WE have long beheld with infinite regret, the increasing depopulation of this oppressed Country, while thousands of our fellow subjects and friends, are posting away to foreign lands in quest of that bread which, with far more ease and facility, might be found at home, were it pleasing God to put it into the hearts of the noble Proprietors of the landed interest, to grant such encouragement as might be mutually advantageous on both sides; yet even admitting the same were granted, and every other encouragement that could possibly be devised for the prosperity of the State, yet how vain are the finest drawn schemes of human policy and human wisdom unassisted by divine, as was easy to be read in the late destructive war. What seas of blood, what millions of treasure, what extent of empire, have we not lost? What then? Should we blame our Ministry, and censure Administration? We should not; as we dare say, neither was wanting wisdom in the Cabinet, nor valour in the field, to accomplish the desirable ends. By what means then were we overthrown? Why, the Divine indignation was awakened against us on account of sin. By these alone were our purposes overthrown. The most evident indications of Divine displeasure appeared against us through the whole process of that war. The poorest of us all are guilty as the rich.

But what shall be done then to recover our past losses, and prevent our future ruin? While the
Princes

Princes of Europe are become so fluctuating and restless in the scale of Empire, that it threatens lightness on our side; that while we are endeavouring by treaty to secure one, we are likely to lose two;—therefore, our system presents us with a new Ally, or rather an old one, almost forgotten, whom, if we will take into the balance of power, we shall be more than match for all our enemies. Britannia will then become the Guardian of Europe,—the Mistress of the Deep,—the terror and delight of surrounding nations, and recover more glory than ever she lost. Though lately visited with sword and famine, yet in tender compassion God has laid these aside. His chastising hand is pleased to act so for the present, in hopes that His goodness will lead us to repentance.

Thus, Great Sir, this renowned Majesty courts your alliance. His friendship is worthy our highest regard; and if our human laws are carried into execution, for the suppression of vice and immorality; and for encouraging religion and virtue, as they are for the recovery of private debts, and public taxes, we should soon see the interposing hand of our Divine Ally in all things that could promote our national felicity. When a people's ways please the Lord, He can make even their enemies to be at peace with them.

Thus, Great Sir, will it be of the highest importance to Administration, and the British dominions, to honour Almighty God, by promoting the interest of his spiritual kingdom as you would an earthly one.—It was amongst the last words of your illustrious Father in the British Senate,—Peace with America, and war with all the world. Say then, Great Sir, in allusion to his words, “Peace with God, and war with all the world.”—I have the honour to be, Most illustrious Sir,

Your most devoted humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

DIALOGUE

BETWIXT A

NOBLEMAN AND A FARMER,

UPON THE

NATIONAL DEBT, &c.

Nobleman. **W**ELL, What news to day
among the politicians
of your quarter?

Farmer. Nothing, my Lord, worth relating.

Nob. Never did any age more abound with politicians; and if their joint speculations could be rendered profitable, never did any age stand more in need; yea, there is not a cobbler in his stall now-a-days, but must be nibbling at state affairs.

Farm. Your Lordship's conclusion being somewhat ironical, and implying, that the common ranks of mankind ought to take no notice of state affairs,—I would, with all due reverence and submission, beg
A leave

leave to differ a little from your Lordship on these heads.

Nob. On what ground?

Farm. On this ground, my Lord. The cobbler is a member of the commonwealth as well as my Lord, or his Grace. If his country flourishes, he reaps some small share of its advantages; if it sinks into ruin, he is sure of a large share of its disadvantages. How then, my Lord, can I condemn the cobbler, if, fearful for the overthrow of his native country, and fond of its preservation, he should draw fancied scenes of happiness for himself and his country, and entertain himself with his neighbours on these heads?

Nob. But you go a great deal further; for I hear you intend a publication, holding forth a vast many fine and marvellous things; *namely*, That it is impossible for the lower ranks of mankind to be able to subsist in these kingdoms, either in city or country;—in cities and towns they are oppressed with the extravagant prices of the necessaries of life, decay of trade, &c. and, in the country, they are oppressed with the exorbitant rents of land, and shortness of leases, that it is no wonder if the people emigrate by hundreds, and by thousands

thousands;—that it is a pity, at the conclusion of a war, to see so many brave sailors and soldiers, by whose valour so many glorious victories have been obtained, disbanded without pension, and in want of bread; some running away to the service of foreign Princes and States; some, in the decline of life, constrained to beg their bread in the streets of these very realms which their valour saved from ruin; some, obliged to betake themselves to the highways for robbery; so that you can scarce go a few miles from your own doors, but you are in danger of being knocked on the head;—that if you had the management of the landed interest of Great Britain, you would, by agriculture alone, pay off the last shilling of the national debt in thirty five years, without the least assistance from the trading part of the nation; would they only continue to pay the interest, that you would point out a way to furnish Great Britain with two hundred thousand men for the service of the army and navy without impressing one man;—that you would never wish to see our most gracious Sovereign have one man less at his readiest call, even in the most profound peace, to keep his restless enemies in some

awe;—that, for this purpose, you would point out a way to raise One million eight hundred thousand pounds Sterling to pension this numerous and puissant army, at nine pound Sterling yearly each man;—that no nobleman or gentleman's fortune, or rents, should suffer one shilling of decrease, by any of these measures;—that the persons upon whom these sums are levied should feel less of their oppressions than before the arduous task was begun;—that the system of measures under consideration, should give such ample encouragement to industry as Britain never experienced since it was a nation;—that they would effectually prevent all emigrations in future, and prove a most sovereign remedy against a spirit of rebellion;—that, in respect of what it is at present, they would make the country beautiful as the garden of Eden;—that whether those measures took place or not, such weight of reason and argument could be offered in their favours, as all the orators on the adverse side should not be able to overturn;—these, and such like assertions, smell so strongly of Romance, that I would be fond to hear their further explanation.

Farm.

Farm. I cannot deny, my Lord, but that I and my neighbours have diverted ourselves, at hours of leisure, upon all these subjects; but a resolution to publish, I could not so easily find; but as your Lordship offers to honour me with your attention, I shall endeavour to explain them, so far as I can; only, I find myself somewhat embarrassed, how to use such freedom and plainness as the nature of the business necessarily requires; and, therefore, I would, with all due reverence and submission, beg your Lordship's approbation of the three following points, as so many preliminary articles, without which I dare not presume to speak.

Nob. What are they?

Farm. Will you be pleased, my Lord, not to take offence, at such honest plainness and freedom of speech, as the nature of the business necessarily requires?

Nob. I will not indeed be angry for honest and plain dealing.

Farm. Will your Lordship be pleased then not to oppose or condemn such measures for payment of the National Debt as shall noways lessen the fortunes or yearly rents of the Nobility and Gentlemen of the nation.

Nob. I could have no reason for that.

Farm. I have only one difficulty, my Lord, which, if I could get over, I should esteem the cause half won, which is this, if your Lordship, with the other noblemen and gentlemen of the nation, in commiseration to the distressed State, would make no alteration or advance in your rents, till the great business was accomplished, or the said thirty-five years were elapsed, as needful to clear the debt, which would scarce be so tedious, as if the heritors had given the tenants two nineteen years from the present date, a thing not altogether uncommon even in these days; the weight, my Lord, of Two Hundred and Eighty Millions must be felt somewhere, your Lordship need only feel it in the exercise of a little patience, but the tenants must suffer severely in their patience, persons, and purses;—in their patience and persons, by hard labour and industry, and, in their purses, by a vast and almost unmeasurable expence in clearing the foresaid debt. I will suppose your Lordship's fortune about twenty thousand pounds yearly rent, if your Lordship would agree to the third preliminary article, namely, to spare the tenants for the above-mentioned time, I will insure your

Lordship

Lordship of thirty thousand pounds a year thereafter, viz. ten thousand above the present rent, and all other heritors a sum in proportion to the extent of their fortunes, that is, one third more than they draw at present, which I will demonstrate to your Lordship's entire satisfaction.

Nob. If your system of measures shall be found productive of such salutary effects as they seem to hold forth, namely, to free the distressed state from such an enormous load of debt, to make the whole nation happy in so many different respects, and, in the conclusion, to make the fortunes of the Nobility and Gentlemen of the nation one third greater than they are at present, I think I might justly deem myself unworthy to possess a foot of land, if I should refuse my acquiescence. But proceed, as soon as possible, to explain your measures.

Farm. I return you thanks, my Lord, for this generous declaration of your Lordship's mind, and flatter myself, that it may be the first dawning of better days awaiting this distressed country, when thousands more of your illustrious Peers shall follow your great example, and

see public prosperity and private felicity walk hand in hand.

There are yet four different points needful to be mentioned as preparatory to the main business, either as needful to set our after-claims and expectations in a just light; or to demonstrate the justice and equity of the same; after which I proceed to obey your Lordship's commands.

The first point concerns the common prices of land.

The second concerns the rents of land.

The third concerns the common time given in farming of lands.

The fourth point concerns the difference between the price of land and the expence needful to improve the same, especially ground lying in a natural state.

And, *first*, with regard to the price of land. Here I must observe to your Lordship, that I have so oft taken notice of the price of land by the acre, the number of acres of each kind, *namely*, infield, outfield, and barren ground, were advertised upon an estate for sale, which estate when sold, and the price known, and a division made of the money upon the whole acres, according to their several qualities, I found the infield generally

rally L. 6 : 6 : 8 each acre, the outfield L. 3, and the barren ground L. 1 : 6 : 8, which I offer to prove at any time to the entire conviction of all men. But some will object, that, thirty or forty years ago, the land was sold higher than now, and that forty years purchase was as common then as twenty-five at present. To this I answer,—That if the number of years purchase were, perhaps, one third more at that time than the present, the rents at this time are double to what they were then, which doth more than overbalance the weight of that objection.

The second point concerns the rents of land.

Here, my Lord, I must observe, that the British Parliament have wisely, and in great favour to the borrowing part of the Nation, interfered by law, to modify the interest of money, limiting it to five *per cent.* it were greatly to be wished, and with equal justice and propriety might be expected, they would also interfere in modifying the rents of lands. In the former case it prevents the lender from oppressing the borrower by an exorbitant interest; in this case, it would prevent the people from oppressing each other, or from being oppressed by an exorbitant

orbitant rent. But what rule shall be laid down for this? I answer, the knowledge of the number of acres of each kind of ground; together with the knowledge of the price of each kind, is a sure rule whereupon to found an equitable rent.

Nob. But what degree of returns on money laid out upon land might be esteemed equitable?

Farm. To this I answer, Five *per cent.* is esteemed sufficient for borrowed money, seven and an half for money laid out upon house-building, although houses are known to be a perishing subject; but if heritors would give their tenants sufficient encouragement with regard to time, I would not offer less than seven and an half *per cent.*—on this further condition also, that they would for some time suffer the two and an half *per cent.* to be applied to a certain important purpose hereafter to be mentioned. The two and an half *per cent.* when added to the five formerly paid, would make the infield acre nine shillings and sixpence, the outfield four shillings and sixpence, and the barren ground acre two shillings; but such rents, at an average, upon all these several kinds, no man could continue
to

to pay without a perpetual lease of the lands, especially in the interior parts of the country, far from cities and towns, from rich manure, and incapable, through distance, of supplying the towns with productions of a more lucrative nature than the common productions of country farms.

The third point, my Lord, respects the common time given in a lease, which is nineteen years. I must again observe to your Lordship, that four pounds Scots each acre upon a country farm may be downright oppression under a lease of nineteen years, when six pounds Scots may be a deliverance from that oppression under a perpetuity of the lands. The reason, my Lord, is evident: One enters upon a farm of your Lordship; his predecessor, upon that farm, has left it in a state of absolute ruin, and he is almost ruined before he can restore it to any tolerable degree of fertility. It is but a few crops he can get of it while in tolerable condition, until the farm, being apparently better, another overbids him, and he must leave it; and if he does himself justice, he must leave it as ruinous as he found it, or, if he should continue upon paying the advanced rent which his neighbour offered, perhaps L. 10 Sterling yearly

ly of rise, having sunk L. 200 Sterling in bringing it from a ruinous state, What now is the consequence? Why, a ruined farm and an envious neighbour oblige him to pay interest for his own money 19 years more. Again, my Lord, so pernicious are short leases to all parties concerned, that they seem calculated on purpose to ruin the master, the tenant, and the soil,—to discourage all industry, yea, and to punish it,—not only to wink at sloth, but also to reward it; both which points I shall prove by the following example: Two neighbours take each of them a farm from a gentleman in the neighbourhood; the farms are of equal extent, equal in condition, equal in rent, and they are equal in circumstances. The one is a person of great industry; so that, by great diligence, and a vast expence, in nine or ten years, his farm is the admiration of the whole country. On the other hand, his neighbour is sluggish, his farm is coveted by none: He makes a shift indeed to pay the landlord, and to have a miserable subsistence for himself; but what now is the consequence of their conduct so different? Why, their time is far advanced; double rent is offered for the one, and nothing

nothing for the other ; some hundred pounds are expended by the industrious man, the half of which he will never draw in ; he cannot afford to continue on the advanced rent, and he suffers by his removal. Thus is he punished in proportion to his industry, as he must remove, whilst the sluggard is rewarded with the peaceable possession of his farm. Their master, meantime, counts upon his advanced rents, frames his living accordingly ; but his new tenants have promised what shall never be paid, and he becomes as unable to hold his fortune as they are to hold their farms.

The fourth and last point I shall trouble your Lordship with is, the difference between the price of land and the expence required to improve it. Your Lordship will remember, that I offered to prove, that the general prices of the several kinds of ground commonly described in farms are, L. 6 : 6 : 8, each acre, for infield, L. 3 for outfield, and L. 1 : 6 : 8 Sterling for barren ground. I shall speak first concerning the barren ground, because it is most ruinous to the tenants, when taken upon improper terms. Six times its price will scarce improve it, which is L. 8 Sterling. I appeal, therefore, to your Lord-

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ship's

ship's judgement; What reason, justice, or equity is in this, that an heritor should purchase barren ground at the above mentioned price, and hold it forever; and the tenant lay out six times its price on its improvement, and possess it but 19 years. My Lord, if ever there was need to apply that Divine Precept of the Lord of Lords to any transaction in human affairs, there is need of it here. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them: for this is the Law and the Prophets."

I proceed now, my Lord, as my poor abilities will permit, to explain the best system of measures I can think of, as needful to produce the salutary effects before mentioned,

England is described by some to be 300 miles in length, and 300 in breadth, which, multiplying the breadth by the length, contains 90,000 square miles.

Scotland is described to be 300 miles in length and 150 in breadth, which contains 45,000 square miles.

The whole island containing 135000 square miles. From which 10,000 square miles will fall to be subtracted as absolutely incapable of cultivation on account of rocky

rocky and inaccessible mountains, moor-lands, woods, rivers, roads, cities, towns, and villages. There remains then 125,000 square miles of land cultivated, and capable of cultivation.

A square mile is said to be 1750 yards every way, which is upwards of 531 acres, consequently, the 125,000 square miles above mentioned contains upwards of 66,375,000 acres, cultivated, and capable of cultivation. To encourage farmers to come under the burdens after mentioned, we will suppose them to obtain perpetual leases of the lands; and, because of some differing circumstances, not alike applicable to England and Scotland, we shall speak concerning each of the Kingdoms separately. And *first*, with regard to Scotland, as containing 45,000 square miles, we strike out 5,000 as its proportion of ground that is incapable of cultivation. We admit Scotland to contain 20,000 square miles under the description of infield, 10,000 square miles of outfield, and 10,000 square miles of barren ground, but capable of cultivation.

And considering the high rents of the lands in Scotland, we will suppose at an average that they reach nearly to 5 per cent.

on the purchase money, (for we speak not at present concerning the rich and fertile fields in the environs of populous towns and cities, which, notwithstanding their advantageous situation, have risen beyond all due bounds,) yet let the whole infield lands in Scotland admit 2 1-half *per cent.* more of rent, which is 3 s. 2 d. Sterling on its purchase money, being L. 6 : 6 : 4 each acre, the 2 1-half *per cent.* would be for some time called a taxation.

Let the whole outfield lands admit 1 s. 6 d. each acre above its present rent, which also is 2 1-half *per cent.* on its purchase money, (being L. 3 Sterling); let the barren grounds also, which never paid any thing, after Farmers have been in possession for seven years without rent, pay thereafter 7 1-half *per cent.* on the purchase money, which purchase money is L. 1 : 6 : 8 Sterling, and of this 7 1-half *per cent.* we must pronounce 2 1-half for some time a taxation. And because I am a stranger to the state of agriculture in England, as also to the general prices of their lands, or rents of the same, which, considering the far greater fertility and richness of the soil, may, in price and rents both, be double to that of ours, we will leave the heritors

and tenants of that kingdom, to rise or fall, on these heads, as they shall judge proper, and to pronounce what proportion of advance in rent they are fit to endure, as their better judgement shall direct them; and therefore, in our system, shall only adventure to put their superior soil on the same footing with our best lands in Scotland, namely, over the whole kingdom of England to admit 3 s. 2 d. each acre above their present rents, for sometime also to be called a taxation; only, we exclude from our measure and reckoning in England, 5,000 square miles, as their proportion of land that is incapable of cultivation. The whole of England, and one-half of Scotland, is considered as infield, in our system upon an equal level, incurring the foresaid tax of 3 s. 2 d. each acre. One fourth part of Scotland is considered as outfield, and incurs a tax of 1 s. 6 d. Sterling each acre, and one fourth is considered as barren ground, and incurs 8 d. each acre of tax, which is its 2 1-half *per cent.*; the other, 1 s. 4 d. being its present rent to the heritor. The whole infield lands of England and Scotland is 105000 square miles, or 55,755,000 acres. The whole outfield lands of Scotland is 10,000

square miles, or 5,310,000 acres, and the whole barren lands of Scotland, that is capable of cultivation, is 10,000 square miles, or 5,310,000 acres. The 2 1-half *per cent.* on each acre, over the whole of the three several qualities above mentioned, exceeds L. 9,400,000 Sterling. But as no man can define, within an entire trifle, what the real measure of the island is, on account of the inequality of its breadth, so neither can any define the precise quantity or number of acres that are in each of the three several qualities before mentioned, without being liable at least to some small errors; must therefore conclude, as our system undertakes only for L. 8,000,000, that a surplus of L. 1,400,000 Sterling will fill up the void of a few errors. If then the 2 and 1-half *per cent.* over the whole island, which we at present call a tax, but afterwards a part of the heritors rent, is devoted to the sole purpose of paying the national debt, its full amount upon the two kingdoms being at least L. 8 000000 Sterling yearly, would, by agriculture alone, pay off the last shilling of the said debt in 35 years, provided that the interest were continued to be paid by the same means it is at present. But as the country

try is so depopulated by oppression and emigrations, that these measures could not so suddenly be completed, also, that the barren lands the first seven years could afford to pay nothing, therefore it would be needful to make an allowance of two or three years to the 35 above mentioned, to atone for the two forementioned defects.

Again, to make the barren lands go off proportionally with the cultivated lands, it is absolutely necessary, in measuring all estates, to examine strictly what proportion the barren lands bore to those under cultivation, and cause every tenant take a proportionable share of each. For example, where one third part of any estate is barren, and two thirds under cultivation, let the tenants, upon this new footing, take 10 acres of barren land for every 20 acres they get of the cultivated lands. The barren lands ought to be divided and distinguished into two different kinds; the stony and marshy ought not to exceed 5 *per cent.* on the purchase money, which is 1 s. 4 d. and the better sort 10 *per cent.* being 2 s. 8 d. Special care should be taken to accommodate all ranks of men, the poor as well as the rich, according to their

their several abilities and inclinations ; the tradesman or cottager that may call for 2, 4, or 6 acres, as well as the wealthy farmer that may ask 100. At same time, all distinction of infield and outfield ought to be abolished ; and none ought to obtain a greater quantity of ground than they are able, or may be enabled in a few years to put into the highest state of cultivation. To suffer the rich, notwithstanding their ability, to engross extensive farms, hinders population and tends to oppression.

Again (excepting the wealthy and opulent traders, in populous towns and cities, whose trade and circumstances lift them above the distresses we complain of,) all else of lower rank, especially the poorer sort of tradesmen and labourers, ought to dip a little in farming, to supply the defects of trade and scarcity of work ; and notwithstanding a little farming, even cottagers ought to have some calling or trade, to follow the same so far as to help them to make a little money, to enable them to keep the produce of their little farms entirely for their own families use, by making up their rent upon a little trade. The produce of their little farms
would

would render them less dependent upon their trades, not having many things to buy; and, by a little trading, they will be less damaged in their circumstances in bad years when crops are defective. Again, by a wise and prudent distribution of their time, between their farms and their trades, fitting some proper portion of time at the one, and exercising themselves in their fields in proper times at the other, they would find very considerable advantage in point of health. Thus much with regard to the means of clearing the national debt, —an object of such amazing importance to this country as might render it greatly worth the attention of those in power to permit some such measures as those to go into execution. But, without a perpetual lease, the people must utterly sink under the weight of such an enormous load. There is no internal strength in this country to effect this great business by any other means. If all the lands in Great Britain were sold for this purpose, it were hardly competent for this great end; but which, if it were accomplished by the measures we so ardently wish, all the surplus of rents upon the land, called a taxation, should return as additional rent into
the

the heritors pockets for ever ; which additional rent of 2 1-half *per cent.* on the cultivated lands, together with the 7 1-half *per cent.* on the barren lands, would make the fortunes of the nobility and gentlemen of the nation 1-third greater than they are at present.

*On the PROVISION of the ARMY and NAVY
of GREAT BRITAIN.*

WOULD it not be matter of infinite regret, if the Mistress of the deep, this beauteous island, should lose her superiority, or sink in the esteem of surrounding nations; to prevent which I would exceedingly rejoice to see her able to uphold such a force in time of peace as would keep her enemies in awe, and make them tremble to rouse her just indignation ; an habitual readiness and preparation for war is one special means (under God) to preserve peace ; for this purpose, my Lord, I would humbly beg leave to offer my thoughts upon a plan for raising L. 1,800,000 Sterling, for the important purpose of pensioning in time of peace, the whole of the British army and seamen of the navy, to the number of 200,000 men,
at

at L. 9 Sterling yearly each man. Here again we must apply to agriculture, and lay a tax of 7 d. each acre upon every farm over the whole island, which upon the 66,375,000 acres, is fully competent for the above purpose. But this would suppose the whole island set off in perpetual leases, which is scarcely to be supposed all of sudden; yet I doubt not but in one or two years, two thirds of the whole island might be over-run by this new transaction, the encouraging nature of the terms, having the national faith in pledge, that they should never be burdened with a shilling more, never be removed more, nor their children to latest ages while they took care to pay their rents; if then but 1,000,000 was raised the first or second year to pension the army, let the filling up of the army, upon this new footing keep even pace, and increase with the increasing fund for the important purpose of their support; but I would never intermit the increase of the army and seamen for the navy, till they arrived to the number of 200,000 effective men.

All young men who had thoughts of the army, should also have some other honest occupation, to assist their pension and
enable

enable them to live more handsomely in time of peace, as also to keep them from worse employment; likewise those intended for the navy might sail in trading vessels, but under such needful restrictions as government might appoint. Those intended for the army in time of peace, might lose little more time from their secular affairs, than one hour in the day for learning their exercise, which might (perhaps) be at their own doors, when in no greater numbers than a serjeant's command, once a quarter in companies of an hundred, and once a year a general muster of the whole troops of a county.

Again, for the more comfortable support of the army in time of peace, each of the soldiers ought to have a small portion of land upon the same terms as other men, to produce them some of the principal necessities of life, so that what with a little farming to occupy some part of the day, and a little exercise at some honest trade or calling, the rest of the day, together with their yearly pension, a soldier might live very handsomely; and nothing being seen in them, but a decent, comely, and regular deportment, this would endear them to all men; and give the rising youth,
and

and their parents too, more honourable thoughts of the army, and take off that odium under which that honourable body have too long lain under in this country.

Again, the officers of the army, being gentlemens sons, we would hope, that if the farmers pension the private men, these gentlemen will find a way to pension their sons. In ancient times the soldiers profession was esteemed very honourable, and the profession itself considered is equally honourable yet; but they have brought themselves into such disgrace by their scandalous and dissolute living, that a youth of sober and decent character rejects the thoughts of the army with shame and abhorrence; and few affect the army now-a-days but those who too much incline a loose and dissolute life. It is no doubt the duty of all parents to train up their children in the principles and practice of piety and virtue, and to instruct them concerning the infinite advantage they shall find in choosing the Lord for their refuge in all states and conditions, but none more so than those who may intend the army or navy; their officers ought to be leading examples of all piety and virtue, to be equally industrious to promote the know-
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Judge and practice of religion and virtue
 among their troops and seamen, as the
 knowledge of their military discipline ; to
 impose fines upon the soldiers for swear-
 ing, drinking, Sabbath-breaking, neglect
 of divine service, and every other immor-
 al practice ; to recommend prayer, reading
 their bibles, daily and duly rewarding and
 encouraging the most religious and virtu-
 ous of the common soldiers with small ad-
 vancements ; and indeed, in every well go-
 verned state, we must acknowledge, that
 merit, or religion and virtue, ought to be
 the sole foundation of promotion to every
 rank and place of power, honour or trust,
 whether civil or military, whether in
 church or state, as those that are most
 faithful to God, will always be most faith-
 ful to their King and Country. The most
 honourable officer in our army would e-
 steem it no small honour, to have an au-
 dience of his Prince when he pleased, and
 to have free admission into the Royal pre-
 sence by night or by day, and present his
 petitions ; and will he be ashamed of such
 intimacy with his God ? Will he almost
 adore his earthly Prince, and be ashamed
 of the Prince of the Kings of the Earth ?
 May never such impiety be seen more
 among

among the gentlemen of the sword. What are all the Princes of Europe but a part of the glittering dust of his feet? An army so disciplined, when going out to war, might, with good ground of hope, expect the God of armies to go forth with them, and to cover their heads in the day of battle. GENTLEMEN of the SWORD, may I be permitted to mention the just foundation of all true valour and bravery. Observe (if you please) the language and spirit, the well grounded confidence of the truly noble and illustrious youth DAVID, (breathed in the following words) when advancing to the proud champion of the Philistines: "Thou comest to me (says he) " with a sword and with a spear, and with " a shield; but I come to thee in the " name of the Lord of Hosts, the God " of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast " this day defied; this day will the Lord " deliver thee into my hand, and I will " smite thee, and take thine head from " thee; and I will give the carcases of the " host of the Philistines, this day, unto the " fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts " of the field, that all the earth may " know that there is a God in Israel.— " And all this assembly shall know, that

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“ the Lord faveth not with sword and
 “ spear, for the battle is the Lord’s, and
 “ he will give you into our hands.”

How worthy also of notice by the officers of our army is the charge of God, given to the noble Generalissimo of the Jewish army. “ This book of the law
 “ (says he) shall not depart out of thy
 “ mouth ; but thou shalt meditate there-
 “ in day and night, that thou mayest ob-
 “ serve to do according to all that is
 “ written therein ; for then shalt thou
 “ make thy way prosperous, and then
 “ shalt thou have good success.—Have
 “ not I commanded thee ;—be strong and
 “ of a good courage ; be not afraid, nei-
 “ ther be thou dismayed, for the Lord
 “ thy God is with thee whithersoever
 “ thou goest.”

Again, the consequent resolution of this great commander, and his declaration to the soldiers, is worthy of most particular notice. “ And if it seem evil unto you
 “ (saith he) to serve the Lord, then chuse
 “ you this day whom you will serve ; but
 “ as for me and my house we will serve
 “ the Lord.” All the affected bravery and seeming valour of the gentlemen of the sword, without this well laid founda-
 tion,

tion, is but foolhardiness and want of thought. And dying for their country in the bed of honour (falsely so called), is dying in the most forlorn and wretched state imaginable, if they fall under the sword of an avenging God for sin; whereas, if they are in a state of favour and friendship with him, and their fortune be to fall in war, as the good king Josiah, yet, dying in peace with God, their state is safe. And if, under a due and universal regard to the will of our Almighty ally, in the religious discipline of our fleets and armies, and a suitable adherence to our duty in other respects as a Christian people, we should at any time be unjustly invaded, or involved into a war with any of our enemies; if we would know the success and event of the war before the sword is drawn, from the oracles of truth, we may divine it when we please, namely, the fate of our enemies in that of the proud Assyrian, when causelessly investing the walls of Jerusalem with his numerous army and boasted power, 2 Kings, ix. 32. "Therefore, thus saith the Lord, concerning the King of Assyria, he shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with

" shield, nor cast a bank against it by
 " the way that he came, by the same
 " shall he return, and shall not come into
 " this city, saith the Lord. For I will
 " defend this city, to save it, for mine
 " own sake, and for my servant David's
 " sake."

" And it came to pass that night, that
 " the angel of the Lord went out and
 " smote in the camp of the Assyrians an
 " hundred and eighty-five thousand men ;
 " and when they arose early in the morn-
 " ing, behold they were all dead corpa-
 " ses."

By some such encouragements as these
 before mentioned, of pension, &c. might
 Great Britain be furnished with 400,000
 of her bravest sons ; so that that unnatu-
 ral, unconstitutional practice of impressing,
 should for ever die away.

*Some Objections Stated and answered, relating
 to the propriety, justice, or equity of Perpetual
 Leases, and other things contained in
 this Essay.*

NOW **B**UT how is it, that through the
 whole course of your debate,
 you insist so much upon a perpetual lease
 of the lands?

Farm.

In Farm. For this reason, my Lord, the desire of a perpetual lease is so far from being unjust, that I see not how upon any other footing the farmers could be saved from oppression, or from oppressing each other without it. The oppression here complained of is, when any of the tenants rashly and inconsiderately overbids their neighbours beyond all due bounds, and the shortness of the leases and bad state of the soil will not enable the tenants to bear up with such rents, which yet, under the encouragement of a perpetual lease, a greater rent could be easily paid. The doctrine of a perpetual lease is supported by four reasons, almost invincible; the first is, That nothing else can exterminate oppression from the landed interest, and which is indeed the source of almost all other oppressions. Now, oppression is in itself a sin, and it is so much the greater as it oft times draws the oppressed into innumerable sins, which otherwise might be avoided, to supply their straits by mean and dirty, yea, oft times by criminal shifts; and sin ought to be by all possible means avoided, not only as an enemy to the private felicity of individuals, but also to the public welfare and prosperity of the state.

state. Oppressions are grievously threatened in scripture with personal judgments; and when oppression becomes so general and universal, as to be almost beyond the controul of human laws, divine judgments must assuredly take place, which never ends but in the ruin of the state.—

“ For the people shall be oppressed every
 “ one by another, and every man by his
 “ neighbour.” Isa. i. 17. 20. “ Seek
 “ judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge
 “ the fatherless, plead for the widow.—
 “ But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be
 “ devoured by the sword; for the mouth
 “ of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.—”

I should be sorry, my Lord, to see the people of Great Britain so lost to the belief of their own principles, as a Christian people, to make it a matter of question, whether a being of infinite perfection and excellency will be as good as his word, or true in his threatnings as well as his promises, if oppression is thus threatened?

That short leases are oppressive, none that understands the theory of agriculture will question, in so far as they neither leave breathing to the farmer, nor time for means of improvement to the soil.— I shall illustrate this truth by the following example :

example: Your Lordship this day has bought a horse, the remains (perhaps) of a fine horse, but rather, I should say, the skeleton of an horse, nothing remains but skin and bone, and bought from the hands of one, who for the space of six weeks, by more than double riding, and less than half maintenance, has brought him to what he now is; with infinite care and best of maintenance, in nine or ten weeks, he begins to look tolerably well. Your Lordship now can get a ride, but not finding all that satisfaction in him you could wish, and resolving to have no longer lease of him than 19 weeks in all, and unwilling that he should go away in better state than your Lordship found him, four weeks before the expiration of your intended lease, your Lordship delivers him over to one of your tormentors, (a carter) with orders to work him night and day, upon half maintenance, until he becomes the same ruined skeleton your Lordship found him. Look now, my Lord, what notable service this poor animal is like to do his succeeding masters, under the same line of conduct, some such service may heritors and tenants expect under the present oeconomy of short leases.

A second reason, my Lord, in behalf of a perpetual lease is this, that, according to the present state of agriculture, at least with us in the north parts of Scotland, to restore the soil to a proper degree of fertility, must cost the tenants a great deal more to improve than it cost the heritors to purchase the same. Your Lordship must be sensible, that no heritor can in reason expect the tenant to improve the soil, but for their own behoof and advantage only; and if they must leave it, should, in justice to themselves, leave it as ruinous as they found it. But if the heritors would have their tenants first to put the soil and then to keep it into a high state of cultivation, is not this good reason whereupon to found a perpetuity. It is very observable, that few heritors are so fond of improving lands they have bought as of buying more; but the reason is apparent to all men, namely, that the buying of some lands is often found but a trifle in respect of its improvement; but the great hardship consists in requiring tenants to improve the same under a short lease, and to claim the benefit of such improvement from the tenant as the heritors right. The hardship of such a claim may be somewhat illustrated.

illustrated by the following example:—
 Suppose your Lordship to lend a poor tradesman an hundred pieces of silver to trade with for the space of 19 years, requiring lawful interest for the same every year, which is indeed your due. By great industry and sober living he finds himself, at the end of the 19 years, possessed of an hundred pieces of gold. The 19 years being expired, he should now pay you an hundred pieces of silver, but your Lordship insists upon an hundred pieces of gold, for this slender and fallacious reason, that it was upon your money he made it; but the sentence of an impartial judge may convince you of your error, and that he owed you nothing but legal interest during the time, and the same value in stock returned which he at first received. The same sentence which holds forth the injustice of your Lordship's claim of gold instead of silver, by parity of reason, pronounces it equally unjust, to demand back a fertile soil where barren only was given.

The 3d reason, my Lord, for a perpetual lease, is drawn from the example of the divine economy in those matters among the Jews. So jealous was the Divine Majesty of that people's oppressing one another, when the

power

power of oppressing fell into their hands, that when bad œconomy or misfortune had mortgaged an inheritance, he would not allow such inheritance to be sold off for ever; so that, to prevent such sale of perpetuity, and the oppressive and ruinous consequences that must attend that family, he appointed every 50 years a year of Jubilee, which year, when it did arrive, every mortgaged inheritance returned back to the former possessor, so that the creditor had no further space to avail himself of upon the inheritance so mortgaged, but till the year of jubilee did arrive; and no doubt it was the creditor's business to advance no further in behalf of the debtor than the inheritance was able to replace from the time of such advancements until the year of the jubilee.

Nob. But shall we never more have it in our power to make any further advantage of our lands, which would be the event of a perpetual lease?

Farm. My Lord, rather say, shall you never more have it in your power to oppress or grind the faces of the poor. You have already taken notice, my Lord, that no man is able to pay so good a rent under a short lease as under a perpetuity, without

without accomplishing his own ruin; damaging the soil, and, by a constant succession of tenants, ruining it to each others hands.

Nob. We might as well sell our lands altogether as let them out of our power by a perpetual lease?

Farm. Far from it, my Lord. If you sell, you receive no more rent; but, in this case, you receive a greater rent than can be given upon any other footing. Even upon your own plan, you have your lands no longer in your power than a few hours every nineteen years, and after two or three occurrences of this sort, perhaps your Lordship dies, and must leave them to another. And were it not better, my Lord, to set your lands upon such terms, as to have the high approbation of heaven, the love and esteem of all men, upon terms that would greatly increase your fortune, without oppression, and suffer your tenants to live happy under you, and leave it in better condition to your heirs.

Nob. But how would your manner of paying the national debt go on in the event of a war?

Farm. My Lord, if Britain were invol-
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ved in a war before the debt was paid, there would be a necessity of intermitting payments during the war; but then your Lordship would soon see the unspeakable advantages of these new funds, as the eight or nine millions levied yearly for the reduction of the debt, together with the L. 1800,000 Sterling for pensioning the army and navy, would make us strong (under God) to give our enemies warm work during the war.

Nob. But might not an 100,000 men for the army and navy both, under pension, be esteemed sufficient in time of peace, and devote the rest of the money to assist in reducing the national debt?

Farm. I cannot agree with your Lordship in that, upon several accounts.

In the first place, an 100,000 men is a force noways adequate to the majesty of the British empire; for the powers of Europe, (especially our enemies,) will always measure, and judge of our real weight and importance according to the number of forces upheld by us in time of peace.

In the second place, the force your Lordship speaks of is so contemptible, that our enemies will be eternally tampering and

and ready to break with us upon the slightest occasions.

In the third place, when the time of need comes, and our forces are inadequate to the task, then must we have recourse to the old, hateful, unconstitutional practice of impressing,—dragging Britannia's free-born sons like slaves to the market, or as cattle to the butcher, while parents, brothers, sisters, wives, and other relations are pouring out their curses and imprecations to fall upon the heads of the authors and causes of their numberless griefs and calamities; and the pretended necessities of the state is offered as the reason of all this disturbance; but the necessities of the state afford no occasion for any such disasters. The state, declined as it is, is able to pension more than twice the number. The peaceful farmers alone, if suitably encouraged, will decide this great business for you, and, at 7 d. per acre, will pension 200,000 men, at L.9 Sterling yearly each man.

In the fourth place, my Lord, no maxim can be more false than that, namely, to devote the army's intended pension to assist in clearing the national debt; for, by the want of a formidable peace estab-

blishment, our enemies will be continually on the watch for some pretended reason to break with us ; so that we shall be for ever daubling in war, when not only the intended pension spoken of will be engrossed, but likewise all the millions provided for the yearly reduction of the debt must wholly be devoted to feed the war ; whereas, by a firm and resolute determination to uphold a powerful army by pension, even in the most profound peace, our peace shall find fewer interruptions, and the readier we are for war, we shall have the fewer provocations to engage in it ; so that the surest way to hasten the conclusion of the debt, is to take the best conclusions to secure a lasting peace.

Nob. How do you instruct, that any part of your system contains a remedy in some measure to prevent a vast many of those robberies which prevail so much in this country.

Farm. My Lord, it is always observed, that, at the conclusion of a war, when the army and navy are disbanded, that robberies become most frequent. Many of these ~~men~~ had away in their youth, without a trade, without

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tion, and without principle. Many of their officers, who ought to be equally attentive to their morals as their military discipline, to suppress swearing, drinking, Sabbath-breaking, &c. are frequently ring-leaders in all these abominations; so that, after being long habituated in a loose and dissolute life, and at last disbanded, they return home, where, having neither trade nor pension, nor any means of subsistence to feed their bodies, and far less to feed their vices; and their poor, impoverished, oppressed country, not being able to give the half of them work, too many are constrained into the highways for robbery, and ingloriously finish their days on an ignominious tree; whereas, if none were appointed their officers but persons of character and principle, who were equally attentive to their religious instruction as their military discipline, and, when discharged from war, had their pension awaiting them, the robberies we complain of would greatly subside. So that, by the neglect of a powerful and well-disciplined army kept in pension, we may be robbed by our enemies of our possessions abroad,—by the neglect of the army, of our money on the high-ways at home,—by the ne-

glect of the army, we hang so many of their bodies,—by the neglect of the army, we ruin many of their souls.

Another grand source of robberies is occasioned by the present oppressive spirit of the times. Many of the farmers of this country are so exceedingly harrassed by each other, and tossed from place to place, that thousands of them, with their families, are tossed out of doors, and may betake themselves to what trade they please. Such of them as are yet standing, considering the low and ruined state of the soil, can seldom sell the necessaries of life on such terms as the poor tradesmen and labourers are able to buy. I shall instance the case of labourers, who, although they had constant work, cannot, in the north country, gain above 8 d. a day. While the meal is 1 s. the peck, their whole week's industry can only reach 4 pecks. What less can a labourer, with a wife, and perhaps three or four children, have during the week. The whole compass of his industry can reach no more but meal and water. But where shall he find cloaths? Where shall he find fire to warm their naked shivering bodies,—to fettle their chattering teeth,—to boil the
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pot with a peevish scanty meal? My Lord, they would need to steal their cloaths, and steal their fire; and, for a house, if oppressors would leave them leisure to prepare for another world, they have most need of "the house appointed for all living." Now, my Lord, if this be their situation when best employed, what must it be when there is no work, and in the more rigid seasons of the year, when work ceases? Words are wanting to express it. Thousands are constrained, no doubt, to solicit the cold hand of charity; and their little ones trudging about, from door to door, in wind and rain, in storm and tempest, in quest of the precarious morsel, to satisfy the innocent cravings of nature. But neither will this do. Many whom they solicit have as much need as themselves. What shall be done now. Patience expires. The coarse tie of human laws can no longer bind the unhappy sufferers. The accumulated oppressions under which the country groans, presses many of them forward to such a course of life as generally leads to an untimely end; and they receive their last charities on an ignominious tree? *Nob.*

Nob. I dare say, your measures would effectually prevent emigrations in time to come. *But ; but what land has (disso-*
lution) Farm. Your Lordship must be sensible of that ; for if the many hundreds, yea, the many thousands that have emigrated from this country, could have possessed lands upon this footing, they would never have encountered the expence of passage, nor danger of the seas, for a precarious living in America. Likewise, it is easy to deduce by just and necessary consequences, that the minds of the people being set at ease and rest, and freed from the oppressive measures under which they have so long groaned, nothing could prove a more sovereign antidote against a spirit of rebellion ; neither could any measures contribute more powerfully towards keeping the necessaries of life in moderation ; for as we must suppose every one (excepting the inhabitants of populous cities and towns) occupying a small field of his own, less or more, the greatest number of the people, having the necessaries of life within themselves, the demand would certainly be far less upon the market. It is likewise evident to your Lordship, that these measures must have a special effect, towards
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beautifying the country ; for, upon this footing, every one would endeavour to outstrip his neighbour, not only in fertilizing the soil, but also in adorning their fields with whatever could embellish or beautify the same, such as inclosures of earth or stone, hedges, rows of trees ; so that poor desolated Scotland, (in respect of what it is at present,) would look as the garden of Eden.

Nob. I am perfectly sensible, that nothing could give such ample and abundant encouragement to a spirit of industry as a perpetual lease.

Farm. Most true, my Lord. It is not easy to conceive what difficulties the spirit of man would not encounter in the improvement of the soil, if, under the influence of such encouragement ; and yet it is but reason, that what he cannot live to enjoy himself, of the fruits of extraordinary industry and expence, he might have the chearing prospect, that his posterity will enjoy it after him. It is certainly the duty of all men, not only to have respect to the comfort and well-being of themselves and families in their own time, but also to use their best endeavours to hand it down in its fullest extent

tent to their posterity. Your Lordship can see, as well as others, the encreasing degeneracy of the manners of the times; to prevent the evil consequences of which, securities are much wanted now, which there was little need for. In your Lordship's better days, young heirs succeed, leases are expiring, many farms and farmers as yet are flourishing; but many of these unneighbourly oppressing mortals, envying the present felicity of their neighbours, run to the young and unexperienced master, overbids beyond all due bounds, whilst his unexperience has no other rule by which to form a judgement of the just value of his lands, but the offers of these envious mortals; the native consequences that unavoidably follow is, that both predecessor and successor in these farms are involved in one general ruin, their farms run out, and their masters greatly hurt; yet, we never deem these ruinous measures justly chargeable upon their masters, till they see it in its consequences, and refuse a remedy. It is evident then to your Lordship, and to all others, that short leases is the source of oppression, and oppression the mother of almost every species of crime and wickedness

ness committed in the land. If there be such a thing as a hard, oppressive master, here and there in a country, short leases gives him too frequent opportunities of accepting the gains of unrighteousness offered by those innumerable swarms of locusts which fly about his palace, upon the report of expiring leases; the gain of unrighteousness it surely is, when it cannot be paid and live comfortably; when it cannot be paid but by the ruin of their families.

Another evil, my Lord, which follows these people in the ruin of each other is, that oft times their ruined posterity are driven to desperate and criminal courses, and dishonest shifts, to supply their straits. The sons oft times can hardly find entrance into a way of life into which they could trust the maintenance of a family. The daughters, not only unportioned and unprovided for, but frequently destitute, are sometimes unduly exposed to temptation, and frequently rush into adulteries and fornications. Hence frequently follow child murders, to hide their shame; thefts and robberies are often the unhappy courses of others, to supply their straits; while a numberless train of executions

cutions endless, puts an untimely end to their existence. Hence it is not impossible but an oppressing farmer, as member of a jury, may bring in his verdict guilty, upon those unhappy creatures, whose crimes they were principally accessory to by the ruin of their families. And although we dare not say that every act of robbery, theft, &c. is the result of oppression, poverty, and ruined circumstances, but sometimes are the effects of evil inclinations within, without any external temptation; yet I am afraid, my Lord, were a close scrutiny to be made into the originating causes of the most that we should find, that the posterity of tradesmen, ruined by oppression, of farmers by short leases and bad neighbours, labouring people without work, disbanded sailors and soldiers without pensions, would make up the main body of these unhappy people, who, by the oppressive spirit of the times, are pushed in such numbers to an untimely end. And now, my Lord, were it possible, upon a due inquiry, to trace the footsteps of these dismal effects up to their proper causes, and find them to have proceeded as above described, your Lordship will readily acknowledge that it is an affair
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of the first moment to provide a remedy, and that an effectual remedy being understood, but not applied, for preventing so much misery and desolation in a State, I leave it with your Lordship to determine, what must one day follow, if those who have it in the power of their hand to apply the ax to the root of so many evils, shall yet notwithstanding decline the same.

Nob. I marvel not so much at the desire of a perpetual lease, which would no doubt be productive of much good, and preventive of much evil, as I marvel at your bringing the national debt into the question; and by that means keeping back, for the space of 35 years, those benefits which alone could induce the heritors to grant a perpetual lease.

Farm. My Lord, the Parliament of Great Britain has concluded, that any interest upon money exceeding 5 *per cent.* is oppressive,—oppressive on the fair trader whose profit is not competent to endure more. But it is evident to all men, that trade is more lucrative than agriculture, and at the same time far less slavish; and if a higher interest than 5 *per cent.* is oppressive upon the trader, it follows with
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equal reason, that a higher return than 5 per cent. on money laid out upon lands is equally oppressive upon agriculture. Should your Lordship observe, that the trader is exposed to losses by bad debtors which the farmers need not, the produce of their grounds being always considered as a ready money bargain, I must beg leave to offer your Lordship an observation of equal weight, which is this, that the farmer is exposed to losses by bad crops, and commonly his losses is attended with far less sympathy; for it is not unworthy your Lordships notice, that when a trader fails in payment, and can instruct real losses as the cause of his insolvency, his creditors are frequently generous enough to give him a discharge for ten shillings in the pound. I wish I could say the poor farmers met with equal generosity in the event of bad crops, although I cannot help thinking, there is rather more reason in favours of the tenant upon this account, bad crops being sent by the hand of heaven for the punishment of sin, of which your Lordship will not deny, that great men have their share as well as we; and if great men refuse the punishment of their iniquity, by landing the whole loss
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and damage of bad years upon the tenants, the reckoning which they shun at one time, must they not make good at another.

And now, my Lord, having founded our judgements (in the concerns of agriculture) upon the verdict of the British Senate in a similar case respecting trade, namely, That a rent on lands exceeding five *per cent.* on the purchase money may be equally oppressive on agriculture, as an interest exceeding five *per cent.* would be on trade, we may certainly conclude, that if the farmers are willing to give two and an half more on the purchase money of the lands, partly to obtain the heritors consent to grant a perpetual lease, and partly for this further reason, that the two and an half *per cent.* for the first thirty-five years may be applied towards the relief of the State, from such an enormous load of debt, I cannot help thinking, my Lord, that I have seen many transactions frankly concluded with far less appearance of equity and reason. But there is a further reason, my Lord, for concluding the national debt near of kin to these funds, which may not be amiss to offer, and that is, That the proprietors of the landed-in-

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terest have the greatest voice in the House of Commons. The voice of incorporated bodies are so feeble, and their number so small, that they have but small weight there. It necessarily follows, that the grand deliberations of that illustrious House must be chiefly swayed by them as the far weightier part; and as they chiefly had, and still have the power, in withholding or granting the necessary supplies, whether in peace or war, which drew on all these millions, we would humbly hope that it will not grate upon their generous dispositions to exercise a little patience, till this ponderous load is done away.

It cannot be denied, my Lord, but that the rents of land already (generally speaking) are fully as heavy as the people are able to bear, yea, almost insupportable to many. But from whence does this hardship arise? From nothing so much as the shortness of the leases, and the discouragement by that means given to improvement. And if they are thus sharp to bear, as is experienced at present, who needed to wonder, if we should plead, that so much of ancient virtue might be summoned back, as to grant them two nineteen years upon the present terms; yet thirty five years

years pleaded for the redemption of the State, is not so long. If this indulgence then is granted to the farmers, and they, notwithstanding, for the sake of a perpetual lease, and for the relief of the State, are willing to fall under the two and an half *per cent.* at present; if there be any thing of hardship in the whole transaction, it is they alone must feel it. And indeed there is nothing else can keep them from sinking under the weight of their own undertakings, but such an extraordinary degree of improvement, as may only be expected from the encouragements of a perpetual lease.

Nob. But what shall be done for those tenants, whose weakness of circumstances is such, that, although they had perpetual leases, are not able to improve to such perfection as to keep them from sinking under the weight of their own undertakings. If with difficulty they pay the present rents, How shall they bear up under the two and an half *per cent.* additional?

Farm. My Lord, I cannot help thinking, that, as they have contracted this weakness by hard usage, and hard times, their masters ought either to give them assistance, or to procure it for them. It

is greatly their interest, my Lord, and perhaps their duty too. It is easy to take such security, and to see the money so applied as to leave the master in no danger. If the tenant feeds the ground, and adds the labour of man and beast, with such manure as the farm affords, what hazard can attend the master, although he grant the most powerful assistance of additional manure that the farm is capable of receiving; and when it is arrived to the highest perfection of cultivation it is capable of receiving, then to demand back the granted supplies in such proportions yearly as is consistent with the tenant's safety.

Nob. I remember you some where assert, that no estate you ever saw advertised for sale, where the number of its acres was advertised also, and the number of each of the three several qualities of grounds commonly distinguished, to wit, infield, outfield, and barren ground; and when you learned the price of the whole estate in gross when sold, and made a division of the money among the whole acres, according to their several qualities, you could never find the purchase money of an acre of infield to exceed L. 6 : 6 : 8, nor the
outfield

outfield above L. 3 Sterling, nor the barren ground above L. 1 : 6 : 8 Sterling each acre, which, at your reckoning, would make the rent of the infield, (at five *per cent.*) 6 s. 4 d. Sterling each acre ; and at seven and an half *per cent.* would be 9s. 6d. which, with the sevenpence added for the Army's pension, would be 10s. 1 d. The outfield acre its five *per cent.* rent, three shillings Sterling, and its seven and an half *per cent.* rent, 4 s. 6 d. with sevenpence for the Army's pension, making 5s. 1 d.— And the barren ground acre its five *per cent.* rent, 1s. 4 d. its seven and an half *per cent.* rent, 2 s. which, with the Army's 7 d. makes 2s. 7 d. so you would have 10s. 1 d. 5 s. 1 d. and 2 s. 7 d. to rent these three different qualities of acres, the Army's pension included ; and make that a rule to rent the whole country without exception ?

Farm. Far from it, my Lord. I only mention some few examples of estates sold within my observation upon these terms, which I can prove when it is required, which prices above mentioned I doubt not may be pretty near to the general run of price, or common value of lands over all the north part of the country at least ; the knowledge of which things, when discovered

covered, should bear a special sway in regulating of rents, and, in the eye of all men of reason, will certainly do so. Whether your Lordship may think the above mentioned rents equitable or not, I shall not enquire; but I am confident they will be found sharp, if not severe, upon inland farms, withdrawn from cities and towns, and distant from rich manure; and, at the same time, in a low state of cultivation. I know numbers of sober and industrious men, occupying farms under 5 s. each acre, that can neither make decent bread to themselves, nor regular payment of their master's rent; yet the reason of such distress is apparent to all men who are willing to see, namely, Short leases. Men are tossed about from place to place, and every out-going tenant leaves his farm in a state of absolute ruin. A succeeding tenant finds the half of his short lease expired before he has got his farm into any tolerable state. It is but a few crops he dares take off it while in tolerable condition, until (finding a second bargain doubtful,) he runs it back into the same state of ruin in which he found it. Thus is the soil ruined, at least rendered incapable of doing justice to either master or tenant.

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The tenant is ruined for want of encouragement to improve, and the spirit of industry is quite broken and discouraged; and, in the oppressive scuffle, the master oft times hurt, or ruined in the end.

An industrious farmer, my Lord, has no footing now-a-days. He is subjected to every discouragement, yea, to punishment, which rises in proportion to his well doing. We will state an example to illustrate our assertion, an example well known to be similar to his common usage. He enters with a ruined farm of 200 acres for 19 years, which cost his master L. 800. Its present rent is L. 40 Sterling. He sinks on this short lease L. 400 on its improvement. His expiring lease brings an envious brother, a devouring locust, to eat up the good of all his industry, who offers his master L. 20 additional rent. The present possessor meets with as much of tender mercy as to get the first offer, upon paying the advanced rent. He renews bargain for 19 years more. His highest punishment at this time is to pay L. 20 interest yearly for the use of his own L. 400, lying upon this farm for 19 years more. As he is all industry to render his farm still more fertile and compleat, he
sinks

sinks L. 400 more on its further improvement; and now his farm is the admiration of the whole country. But the unhappy circumstance of an expiring lease brings a second charge of removal. His oppressing brother again returns, and offers L. 20 more of additional rent. Our poor old resider is now reduced to the unhappy dilemma, either of paying more for his possession than it is really worth, or of leaving all his wealth upon another man's ground;—of paying L. 80 Sterling yearly for that farm which was dear of L. 40 when he entered to it; and, after having laid out as much on its improvement as his master on its purchase, must finish the remainder of his days in poverty and want. This, my Lord, is the common punishment, and the common usage of an industrious man; while, on the other hand, a sluggard wants not his reward, but is sure of encouragement in proportion to his sloth. As he improves not, his farm makes no appearance. When his lease expires, no man covets his possession. His master dares not raise his rent, for neither himself, nor any other, would pay it. If his master promises it for 19 years more, he can promise it to his posterity

sterity for 1900, if they be wise enough to follow the same line of conduct. To pay their rent, and preserve to themselves a miserable subsistence is all they should study; and, in the extreme of sloth, lies all their security. But I return to answer the question implied in your Lordship's last words, namely, Whether I thought 10s. 1d. each acre for infield, 5s. 1d. for outfield, and 2s. 7d. for barren ground, should be a general rule over the whole country.

I answer, my Lord, as formerly, far from it, except in the case of inland parts, or farms at a distance from cities and towns, or rich manure, and their state of cultivation low; in either of these cases, the forementioned rents may be found abundantly sharp. But wherever lands may ly, or however remote from any needful advantages for improvement, if there is any where to be found a strong, fertile, and rich soil, or grounds in the neighbourhood of populous cities and towns, where such productions, roots, or other vegetables are wanted, as may be four, five, or six times the value of the common productions of country farms, whatever men can afford to pay for such grounds

grounds under a lease of one or two 19 years, and retain a comfortable subsistence for themselves, whether the rents of such favourably circumstanced grounds may be one, two, three, or more pounds each acre, whatever men will give for such grounds under a tolerable length of lease; and they will always give more for a perpetual lease: And let men pay, or strain to the highest pitch that human industry can reach under a lease of tolerable length, and they are still able to exceed under a perpetuity; and the reason is evident, the possessor of ground under any lease of tolerable length, has always a jealous eye towards the end of it, if not for himself, at least for his posterity, least some unjust, oppressive invader, should find means to supplant either him or his children, and deprive them of the benefits of a long course of great industry; and the greater their industry the more their damage in the end. In the event of their removal, this consideration checks them in the progress of their improvement, and disposes them to proceed but a certain limited length, lest a heavier ruin attends its conclusion. But a perpetual lease removes all such jealousies, gives all fears to the wind;

wind; and fears nothing so much as to come short one degree of the highest perfection of cultivation that the soil is capable of receiving. This rouses the spirit of industry to the highest pitch, gives it the most ample encouragement, and fairest of play. Under this the sober, honest, and industrious man, shall always succeed. No disappointment or defeat can check his honest career; and nothing but prodigality, sloth, or bad economy, can entail ruin upon him or his posterity.

Nob. But would the ample encouragements of a perpetual lease afford no greater advantage to the heritors than the two and an half *per cent.* so oft spoken off, which, above the current rents, (according to your account) is only 3 s. 9 d. each acre upon infield, 2 s. 1 d. upon outfield, and 1 s. 3 d. upon barren ground, of rise, even the Army's pension included?

Farm. My Lord, hitherto I have spoken according to the sentiments of the most judicious and experienced within the circle of my acquaintance; but their voices cannot be pronounced the voice of the nation. But whether the general voice of the nation should rise above, or fall below this proportion, one thing your Lordship

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will

will always be sure of, to wit, The highest rents, under a perpetuity, will always see the most flourishing farmers, and always behold the most improved soil. And the reverse of this will be equally evident under the œconomy of short leases. Their oppressive effects will ruin the soil, will ruin the people, depopulate your countries, and drive the inhabitants, in hundreds and in thousands, away to foreign States. But, supposing your Lordship were half a prosylite to our system, this ought always to have a place in our considerations, that the man of industry has always a title to a comfortable subsistence; yea, his usage is injurious, partial, and oppressive, if a present subsistence is all he can reach. He has a right to save. The education of his children, the advantageous settlement of sons in business to do for themselves, the portioning of daughters, either for support in their maiden state, or to recommend them to suitable and advantageous matches, the support of himself in old age, when ability and strength for work shall fail him, absolutely require it. These things premised and allowed, your Lordship (if pleased) might examine your grounds, might call in men
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of the greatest integrity, judgement, and experience in these matters. Of these men, some in behalf of your Lordship, and some for the tenants. These should be deeply sworn to strict impartiality, and due regard to the welfare of both parties, as they should be able to answer at the dread Tribunal; should strictly examine all the different qualities of the several grounds, their natures, present state of cultivation; their differing advantages or disadvantages, in their access to improvement; and having duly weighed all circumstances needful upon which to form their judgements, should proceed to give judgement upon every differing field; their rents, each acre, according to their differing qualities, which might be pronounced thus: By naming the highest rent they could bear under a lease of one or two 19 years; and then pronouncing how much more they could possibly bear for the sake of a perpetuity. And if this twofold committee should differ a little in their own judgements, each should have power to chuse a person of their own *quorum* to act in quality of arbitrators; but if the two arbitrators should differ a little betwixt themselves, they should have

power to nominate one person out of the whole to pass the final sentence. This, my Lord, is the true method to make the best of your lands at once that ever they shall be able to produce, either to your Lordship, or to your latest posterity. Let not that wretched vulgar conceit ever have place in your noble breast, which I have frequently heard, that there may be harm in a perpetual lease to heritors, on this account, that if any new or extraordinary methods of improvement were in future discovered, that might considerably increase the value of their lands, a perpetual lease would cut them off from such advantages as this might afford them. This conceit, my Lord, is somewhat like the dog in the fable. Swimming across the river with a piece of beef in his teeth, but perceiving (his own shadow) another dog, as he thought, under water, with a bit of the same kind in his teeth, he, greedily grasping at the other's prize, lets go his own. Grasping at the shadow, he loseth the substance. To confute this groundless conceit just now mentioned, a little reflection will convince your Lordship, that short leases will bar the door against all such supposed advantages, and, as already said,

said, will ruin the soil, impoverish the people, drive them out of the kingdom, and make your lands of less consequence than they are at present.

Will a man, living by hard labour and industry, if starved for weeks and sickened with famine, restored with cordials another division of his time, well-fed a third time, alternately ruined and restored again, —will a constant round of such destructive extremes through life, render his labours so beneficial to himself and family, as the labours of that man who is well fed and nourished through the whole of his life? Assuredly not. In a perpetual lease, therefore, lies your Lordship's greatest advantage, as well as your tenants; and as it is full of advantage to both parties, so also is it full of reason. There is not an acre of infield in a low state of cultivation but will require nearly its value to restore it to a proper state. There is not an acre of outfield but will take twice its price to improve it properly; nor an acre of barren ground but will take six times its price for its suitable improvement. If then your Lordship purchase this infield at little more than L. 6 Sterling, and I lay out almost its price on its improvement;

if you purchase your outfield acre at L. 3, and I lay out L. 6 on its improvement; if you purchase barren ground at L. 1 : 6 : 8, and I improve it at the expence of L. 8 Sterling;—if, upon such easy terms, your Lordship is made proprietor for ever, and I, upon such expensive terms of improvement, so far exceeding its real value, can only possess it for one or two nineteen years, Is there a shadow of reason, justice, or equity, in such a transaction?—Will this accord with the golden precept of our divine Redeemer, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them?” Was not my improvement money as much mine as your Lordship’s purchase money was yours before we jointly laid them on these grounds? With what indignation would your Lordship reprobate that lawless and tyrannic power who would require you to renounce these grounds, and relinquish your just and heritable right, without returning your purchase money; and if I must remove from your Lordship’s grounds, is not my title and right equal, by parity of reason, to demand back my improvement money? Your Lordship, in buying lands which cannot produce without improvement,

provement, buys, as it were, the body of a dead man, who is capable of no action without life. Our improvement money comes in, and in concurrence with the dew of heaven, which is free to all, inspires the dead soil with, and nourishes vegetable life; and as the body of a dead man is of no moment without life, so neither is the soil without improvement.

The naked and bare existence of a barren field can be of no value to your Lordship, nor others, without improvement. Whoever then shall improve and fertilize this barren field, adds far more to its real value than your Lordship, who only could produce it under a barren existence.

From what has been said, your Lordship will easily perceive the reasonableness, justice, and equity of a perpetuity. Perhaps neither your Lordship, or even your factors, ever studied to enter into, or take any such comparative view of the difference in point of expence, between the purchase of ground and its improvement; and therefore there may be much innocence on your Lordship's part and theirs under some error, so long as those circumstances are unknown, which only can enable to distinguish between error and truth. There

is nothing I could more earnestly wish than that your Lordship, and every other proprietor of land, might at once enter into every possible advantage, by your grounds, that is consistent with your joint prosperity, and that of your farmers. The great Author of Nature, who had the comfort and happiness of all his creatures, of poor and rich equally in his view, has so wisely ordered matters, that if one part of mankind shall, either by flight or might, subtract from the comfort or happiness of the other, to make their own superabundant; they may enjoy, or seem to enjoy, the forbidden advantage for a time, but the measure will bitter ere long, back on themselves recoil; and by how much they have exceeded, by partiality, in their own favours, by so much the more, in the end, shall they find themselves wanting in that, which otherways would have been found their just right; and therefore it is my most fervent desire, that your Lordship, and all others in power, may enter into such measures for the relief of this distressed country, as may be abundantly productive of the so much desired effects; as may not only relieve them from their oppressive, and insupportably public

public burdens as a State, but also, as may relieve them from their private distresses and calamities as individuals, and diffuse universal happiness and prosperity through the whole body of the people.

The prophet Isaiah having given a most pitiful description of the uncommon corruption and depravity of the Jewish State, so entirely corrupted, that, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head,—from the most inferior subject, ascending through every other rank, to the throne itself, there was no soundness, but wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores,—sores,—neither closed, nor bound up, nor mollified with ointment; not one wholesome, or effectual remedy had hitherto been applied; their country desolated and depopulated by oppression within, and by the enemy without; their land devoured in numberless respects, as if by a general conflagration, or by the sword of the public foe. What shall be done in this extremity?—Will not a public acknowledgement of guilt, in a day of humiliation, with solemn lifting up of their hands, in prayer for forgiveness, partial amendment for a time, after which, reserving to themselves the liberty of returning like a dog to the vomit,

mit, by oppression and other acts of violence, until blood toucheth blood. No, says the prophet, He will not hear you, as your hands are full of blood. Wherein then consists the remedy? Why, wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well. These are general precepts, the grand and comprehensive import of which must be attended to by the whole people. But, (says the prophet,) I have a special word of commission to rulers, judges, and all else of eminent place and station. What is it? Why, seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. But we have persisted so long in our rebellious courses, (say the people) that we can scarce expect forgiveness. Far from it says the prophet. Hear the voice of your benignant Creator. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as wool; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as snow. But what shall be the consequence, if either we willingly attend to this our duty, or, if we refuse it and rebel, say they? If you be willing and obedient (says He) you shall

shall eat of the fat of the land. But if yet refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it.

So that, if ever a reformation takes place, my Lord, either in our public measures, or in our private lives and conversations, that will be acceptable to the divine Majesty, or even available to save us from inevitable destruction, to relieve from every oppression must be our first work.

Nob. But if perpetual leases were granted, and no concern taken with the national debt, What might be the consequence?

Farm. Not quite favourable, my Lord, although it might soften our private distresses for some time; yet, while the public safety is unregarded, while we are unable either to preserve peace, or to support war or private felicity, stands upon a very precarious foundation; and by this ill-judged parsimony, we may lose our all, and find good time for repentance when it cannot profit. But, my Lord, if the virtue of the nation is so far gone in a decline, that we could not expect its acquiescence in a measure proposing such rapid relief, we should by all possible means endeavour to please, and say, concerning the
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two and an half *per cent.* for reducing the debt; Let the one half go into the pockets of the heritors, and the other half to the relief of the state; by which means, a nobleman of L. 20,000 yearly rent this season, might, one or two years hence, enter with L. 5000 more, A squire of L. 1000 this year, might, at that same period, enter worth L. 250 more, and all others in proportion to the size of their fortunes. Upon this plan, the national debt would require three score and ten years to discharge; at the end of which time our before mentioned estates would rise again; the one L. 5000 more, and the other L. 250, and all others in proportion.

- Another most ruinous, destructive, and oppressive practice upon the landed interest is, the engrossing of farms, a practice taken notice of by the celebrated Dr Price, as greatly instrumental, in the small compass of 12 years, to the diminishing the inhabitants of Great Britain to the number of 200,000. How lamentable, my Lord, to see a dozen or twenty cottager families driven out, to make way for one or two opulent gentlemen farmers. To look abroad over a vast extent of country,

try, and scarce perceive two or three smoking chimnies, where 20 or 30 have been seen before. I know no reason can be offered in justification of this measure, excepting this alone, that these opulent and wealthy tenants make far more rapid advances in the progress of improvement, by means of their great wealth, and their rents generally well paid; but if these little cottagers were properly encouraged and supported, their little spots of ground might be as well improv'd, and their rents as well paid as the others. Neither have we a right, my Lord, to drive out, crush, or oppress these poor and needy ones, notwithstanding the small trouble of supporting or assisting to put them in a fair and prosperous way to do for themselves. It is for this end, that Providence has dispersed such various and different lots among men, that they be useful to each other; that the rich may have the opportunity of imitating the godlike bounty of the great Creator. And as in this respect the poor cannot render themselves independent of the friendship, bounty, magnificence of the rich; so neither have the rich the means of supporting their grandeur, pomp, and magnificence, without

the labours of the industrious poor. It is from this wisely ordered, but various lots of mankind, all the duties of the Christian life arise. And as this practice of engrossing farms is ruinous to the poor as individuals, so it is equally injurious to the public welfare and prosperity of the State. It deprives the State of a most important source of landmen for the Army, and seamen for the Navy upon the commencement of a war. How easy is your access to a supply of men from those humble abodes, when compared with the difficulties you must meet with from your rich and wealthy people; and if Government is constrained, by the want of men, to have recourse to violent measures for supplying the same, who have we to blame, or what but our own ruinous and impolitic measures, in exterminating those useful and industrious people from our country, by dire oppression and constant emigration, that are so abundantly useful both in peace and war.

Solomon says, "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety" May we not say, with equal truth, In the multitude of people there is safety, yea more, there is profit and advantage. Is not a
numerous

numerous and prosperous people, our wealth in trade, and, under God, our strength in war? How melancholy the account of us from any other state in Europe? The inhabitants of Great Britain sunk to seven or eight millions, and France increased to twenty five; the greater still increasing; the lesser always decreasing. Unto what shall these different tendencies arrive at last? Our public debts equal to the heritable right of all the lands in Great Britain. Many millions of its acres, that are capable of cultivation lying, like a desolate wilderness, in want of men, and suitable encouragement to improve the same,—a country, if well improved, capable of maintaining thirty millions of souls, yet scarce containing a fourth of that number. Will your Lordship say, Incredible, impossible! What rational evidence can be offered in support of this? I answer, The island exceeds sixty millions of acres, cultivated and capable of cultivation. Admit two acres as competent to answer all the necessities of each person; these two acres improved to perfection, the one in grass, the other in grain, the produce of the acre under grain will as far exceed the necessities of a single person

as, over the whole island, will answer the demand for horses, and for every other use which the country may require; and if distilleries, breweries, horses, &c. should engross the one half, yet the other would be competent for the human species, was the country properly improved, and suitable encouragement given for that purpose. But let us grant, my Lord, that this computation were a little aside, whether to the right hand or to the left, yet this could be no objection to the propriety of those measures, which tend so exceedingly to enrich both the soil and its inhabitants, by giving every possible encouragement for these important ends. Will your Lordship say, What are the means? I answer, Abolish short leases, introduce perpetual leases, or for some such number of years as are almost equivalent. These are the means which fall under the description of second causes. The great first cause of all prosperity, and every other blessing, whether personal or national, is the divine favour; and, my Lord, although we can do nothing to merit this, yet we may throw ourselves in the way wherein it is to be found. Such is the divine benignity and goodness of the great

Creator,

Creator, that he will not leave a mind or sincere endeavour to pass unrewarded. What then remains best? That your Lordship, and others in high station and power, take the necessary steps to stir up a more vigorous exertion of the civil power, to stem that torrent of vice and immorality which hath broken in upon these kingdoms, and to give every possible encouragement to piety and virtue. In the endeavouring to bring the people back again to a due and reverential regard to the worship and service of the great Creator, from whom we have so long and so deeply revolted; and in order to put life, spirit, and activity in magistrates, judges, and rulers, for enforcing a due regard, not only to the laws of the land, but also to every divine law and ordinance: That your Lordship and others would use your utmost and best endeavours to obtain a commission of men fearing God, men of truth, and hating covetousness, to preside over the conduct of all the several subordinations of those that bear rule, in order to produce the great effects above mentioned.

All this, my Lord, is nothing but due conformity to the pious purpose and royal

proclamation of our most gracious Sovereign, to the grand import of which, if we did duly attend, by a returning back, and closer adherence to our Almighty ally, and in a due observance of his righteous laws, the armies of Great Britain might beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks. No weapon formed against them should ever prosper, neither needed they to learn the arts of war any more; but might sit abundantly happy, every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree.

Nob. But might not a long lease give almost as much satisfaction as a perpetuity?

Farm. Yes, my Lord, provided that you did allow such a number of years into that lease as might be supposed to run parallel with the date of creation, and the final consummation of all things; as the very intent of the same is to prevent the sin of oppressing, and the misery of being oppressed. But the voice of a refusal is strongly expressive of a disregard to the welfare of future posterity, strongly expressive of a most violent attachment to a spirit of oppression, and which is a most heinous and God-provoking sin. Let therefore

"therefore your Lordship's bounty to your fellow creatures bear some proportion, or likeness to the great Creator's bounty, manifested to your Lordship. Let not that misery find access to your grounds in future ages which your Lordship is so abundantly able, by one potent deed, for ever to discharge at present. This state your Lordship well knows is but probationary. In order to another, the one half of life is past ere we be aware of its great end and meaning. The other half is all uncertainty. Not one moment sure. What pity then, my Lord, and what infinite cause of regret, when your Lordship is gone hence, and is no more in time, that, by a false slip of inadvertence in your Lordship, posterity should find an opportunity to oppress, and rend each other to pieces upon your Lordship's grounds, which you could easily have prevented, to your immortal honour. Give them fair play then, my Lord, for life. You have it in your power just now to take such measures as will break the jaws of the wicked in after ages, and keep the spoil out of their teeth. Deliver the poor then, my Lord, as a roe from the hunter. They have to run for the Crown incorruptible; and as their

Redeemer is mighty, he will deliver your Lordship from a far more formidable enemy, who goes about night and day seeking whom he may devour! Let not oppressors in after days overload whom your Lordship can save. Oppression in the extreme drowns men in earthly cares. They must rise early, sit late, and eat the bread of sorrows; and are often undone by excessive want in labouring to enable others to undo themselves by excessive abundance. Be it then your Lordship's study, to alleviate the miseries, and promote the happiness of all around you, as knowing yourself strictly accountable for the management of that great fortune with which your Almighty Benefactor hath entrusted you, not as its proprietor for ever, but as its steward for a time. Frequently take a walk, in serious meditation, upon the solemn silent shore of that vast ocean you must sail so soon. Examine the real value of the good things of time from the thoughts you will have of them in your expiring moments, and what you would do for the honour of God in the day of sickness and death. Esteem it your highest wisdom to do for Him in the day of prosperity and health. Wherein lies the wisdom,

wisdom, my Lord, of being close handed in those matters, that would so exceedingly conduce to the honour of Him, on whom we depend for all we hold dear. Men are wonderful ambitious of gainful offices, honourable stations, and high degrees of the royal favour of earthly Princes; and, Were it not equally wise to cherish the noble ambition of standing high in the favour of heaven, wherein lies the wisdom of learned and great men, to controvert a doctrine so full of happiness to others, without abridging their own, while, at the same time, those earthly benefits, or means of happiness, shall be equally deserted by both parties a few years hence; and who can tell, but, or so many days, the shafts of death fly as thick around the palaces of Princes, and great men, as our humble cottages. According to that important passage, quoted from the Grave, "Death's shafts fly thick. Here falls a village swain, and there his pamper'd Lord." The cup goes round, and who so artful as put it past him. How unceremonious is the King of Terrors, making no apologies for his rudest attacks upon the persons of Princes, climbing in like a thief at the windows of their

their noblest palaces, by night as well as day. Should any great and invincible conqueror, whose integrity, uprightness, and royal bounty was equal to his greatness; should such a one give your Lordship the fullest assurance and most undoubted right to the possession of a kingdom, upon the sole condition of standing by his side, in subjection to his laws, humane to his soldiers, fighting valiantly under his banner, and enduring all the hardships of the field for one single campaign, Would not your Lordship think it an easy conquest upon such terms? The Prince of the kings of the earth is this Mighty Conqueror, your Lordship's life is the campaign, which being spent as above in fighting valiantly under his banner against your joint enemies, enduring all the hardships of the field of the most self-denying duties that his laws can require respecting either his royal Person, your fellow soldiers, or your self. In which event, he offers your Lordship a kingdom which cannot be moved. Such is your Lordship's pious and unblameable life in other respects, that even the prying eye of envy, nor the tongue of slander know not where to fix. But if some
 part

part of the genuine meaning of an important and divine precept should say, "One thing thou lackest," which would exceedingly conduce to the happiness of the whole people; would raise to competency, all that are depressed under the extreme of poverty; would make the great still greater; their fortunes far more ample; their names far more illustrious; would diffuse universal happiness through every member of the body politic; would raise the declined State from much of present misery, to the highest pinnacle of earthly prosperity; would make your desolated and depopulated country beautiful as Eden garden, and her people numerous as the stars of heaven. Would your Lordship hesitate? I know you would not. Try then, my Lord, this doctrine of perpetuity. Bring it to the touchstone of that important precept, "Whatever you would that men should do unto you, do ye so even unto them." When Heaven and earth are passed away, when all the world is in flaming fire; when the earth, with all its works, are burnt up, He will support the dignity of this precept, will magnify and make it honourable, to the inexpressible terror of all who have opposed

opposed the same. Are short leases, then, productive of oppression? Is oppression sin, and threatened with national judgments, from which there is no rescue, but by reclaiming from such evils? And in the whole of our transactions with mankind, to keep a steady eye to those branches of duty, seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Are perpetual leases big with relief, relief from the sin, and from the misery, from the guilt, and from the punishment? If so, How then, my Lord, can his tenants at will, the Lords of the universe, deny the Lord of angels so reasonable a request? Is it not their duty, their interest, their highest honour, to act in concert with Him. Came he to save from misery, and to offer the possession of a permanent, durable, everlasting felicity? He hath furnished your Lordship with power, in your own sphere, to follow the same illustrious example. But whom came he to save from misery, and to instal into such happiness? His friends, and those without whom He could not support his Dignity and State? No, but his enemies, and those who sought his life. His enemies in the field, and in proud rebellious

rebellious arms. Did their requital of so much evil, for so much good, fill him with resentment and indignation. To learn this, look at the last prayer of this Almighty Sufferer. "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

For whom then doth this meek and patient prince of peace solicit your Lordship's favour in these words? "Relieve the oppressed?" Is it for your enemies or those who sought your life? No; but your friends, your poor brethren, and those without whose industry your Lordship could not uphold your pomp and state, nor even so much as continue in existence. But what doth the Lord of life plead in their behalf at your Lordship's hands? Is it to die for your friends, as he did for his enemies? No; but to suffer them to live, to save them from each other, and to enable them to partake of all the blessings of the bounteous hand of heaven; to dispense with something from the lap of luxury, that they may abound with all things necessary; that the poor may be able to feed, to cloath, to educate their children, to furnish them with callings, to support themselves with decency and honesty, and that ignorance and ungodli-

ness, idleness and slavery, may not overrun the whole land; that their poor parents may not be oppressed and overloaded with the cares of this life, in rising early, sitting late, and eating the bread of sorrow, fighting themselves out of breath in gathering together the gains of oppression for others, but to suffer them by all means to have a calmer passage through life, to have leisure to converse with their children on things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and to instruct them in the great and momentous concerns of a future life and an eternal state; and, amidst all the hurry and bustle of the trivial affairs of time, not to forget the one thing needful, the better part, which, if duly attended to and once secured, should never be taken from them. All these things pleaded in their favour, my Lord, is their due, not only from motives of pity and compassion, but also from the uniform language and unerring dictates of right reason. All the solid grandeur of the British nation takes its rise upon the joint industry of these laborious ones, and without which, what were all your several beautiful countries but so many barren desolate fields of famine? It is written

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in scripture, "Thou shalt not muzzle the
 "ox that treadeth out the corn." Doth
 God take care for oxen, or doth he not
 say so for our sakes, and for our instruc-
 tion, intimating so much, that the labori-
 ous part of mankind, by whose industry
 the whole is upheld, ought by no means
 to be strangers to those sweets they are
 preparing with such assiduity for others.
 How uncomfortable is it, my Lord, to
 spend the whole of life in labouring to
 prepare the cup of unmixed pleasure (were
 it possible) for others, and that they should,
 with greediness, drink so deep as to leave
 little else at bottom but wormwood and
 gall for their servants. May it then be
 the constant study of all whom it may
 concern, or of all, without exception,
 whom the divine providence may put it
 in their power, to follow the example of
 that illustrious ancient, Job: "When the
 "ear heard me then it blessed me, and
 "when the eye saw me then it gave wit-
 "ness to me; because I delivered the
 "poor that cryed, and the fatherless, and
 "him that had none to help him. The
 "blessing of him that was ready to perish
 "came upon me, and I caused the wi-
 "dow's heart to sing for joy. I put on
 H 2 "righteousness,

" righteousness, and it clothed me. My
 " judgement was as a robe and a diadem.
 " I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I
 " to the lame. I was a father to the
 " poor, and the cause which I knew not
 " I searched out; and I brake the jaws
 " of the wicked, and plucked the spoil
 " out of his teeth." Who would not,
 my Lord, study to follow such a godlike
 example, to gain the high, the divine
 approbation that follows Job, " Hast thou
 " considered my servant Job, that there
 " is none like him in all the earth, a per-
 " fect and an upright man, one that
 " feareth God and escheweth evil, and
 " still he holdeth fast his integrity."

Nob. Whatever of justice or equity may
 be found in these your sentiments, yet I
 am afraid they shall fall into disesteem
 with the generality of people, from a too
 large intermixture of scripture quotations
 and religious phrases; and your system
 of public measures become the subject of
 laughter upon that account.

Farm. I have no great apprehensions of
 that, my Lord, except from atheists or
 infidels, and the sentiments or laughter of
 these are not worth our notice. Let these
 preposterous fools prove first that there is

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no God, no future state of rewards and punishments, no traces of the being and perfections of an infinite Majesty in the Scriptures, nor any footsteps of his wisdom, power, and goodness in the works of creation; then may we accord in sentiments with them, and join the athiestical laugh.

Nob. I am afraid that would be assigning them too hard a task?

Farm. But these points, my Lord, unproven by them, proves at once their own madness and folly. For the very possibility, that there may be a God, will be sufficient to determine any wise man to embrace that belief as his safest and surest sanctuary. For let us grant for a little all the Athiest could wish, namely, That there were no God; yet, where could the danger be to a virtuous and religious man when he dies? But, if there is a God, Where shall the Athiest and Infidel appear? But it is the interest of none but evil, does only to wish there was no God. The worst of men admire virtue in others, and abominate their vices, although they cannot enter into the practice of virtue, nor abhorrence of vice in themselves; yet this disease of their men-

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tal powers, proves the truth of a Scripture doctrine whether they will or not, namely, Original sin. And if they cannot help beholding the loveliness and excellency of virtue, and an ugliness and deformity in vice; and even in some good fits, could wish they were virtuous, and their vices not predominant, where in could they find their true gain, to destroy the great Author and Rewarder of virtue; and the great enemy to, and punisher of vice.—But the light of Nature within, the works of Nature without, and tokens of divinity in the Scriptures before us, bear such abundant testimony to a reasonable enquirer, as might sufficiently convince all men, That He is, and that He will be the Rewarder of all them that diligently seek Him. How absurd, then, to admit virtue, so lovely fair, and allow her neither portion nor reward.—To acknowledge the ugliness and criminality of vice, but to admit of no punishment, and, at the same time, by this rotten and ill-made ready system, doeth as much as in them lieth to nullify all government, and good order in society. For where is the bands that will bind to a suitable attention to duty (in the present
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lapsed and depraved state of human nature) if not the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments; which consideration alone is sufficiently powerful to dispose men to act with integrity and justice in life. Admitted we then the belief of a God, and it is beyond all dispute that the Scriptures are his word, and the alone and only rule of faith and manners given to us, it is inconsistent with the belief of a God, to believe him any other than a Being of infinite perfection and excellency; and if infinite in every perfection, then certainly so in wisdom; but those who admit his Being, but denies the divinity of the Scriptures, does in fact charge God with folly. For what greater folly than to create such a world as this, and display such infinite wisdom, power, and goodness in furnishing the same, and create such numberless millions of rational creatures, endowed with reason, and capable of government, and yet take no account of their doings. The very asserting such a besotted belief carries along with it its own confutation. For we can see such evident testimony of the divinity of the Scriptures from the divine Majesty's dealings with persons and nations in all

all ages, according to the tenor of his Will therein revealed; in ways, both of judgement and mercy, and according to the tenor of their conduct in life, as may abundantly satisfy all men touching their divine authority. It follows then, that the Scriptures being the only rule of faith and manners given unto men, all men possessed of such an invaluable treasure, ought to make them their sole and only counsellors, and the guide of their lives. These only contain the true maxims of unerring wisdom, the best foundation of all law, and the never failing standard of true government. These only are worthy to be the model of our sentiments, the rule of our conversations, the model of our tempers, and the guide of our whole lives. Your Lordship will not readily object to the talents of Joshua and David, either as warriors, or statesmen and politicians, nor deny their abilities either for the cabinet or field. Upon whence, or by what means, were they so richly furnished for such important offices and stations. Let us examine the oracles of truth. Joshua, chap. I. "And the Lord spake unto Joshua, (Moses' Minister,) saying, As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee."

" I be with thee. I will not fail thee
 " nor forsake thee: Only be thou strong
 " and very courageous, that thou mayest
 " observe to do according to all the law
 " that Moses, my servant, commanded
 " thee: Turn not from it to the right
 " hand nor to the left, that thou mayest
 " prosper whithersoever thou goest. This
 " Book of the law shall not depart out
 " of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate
 " in it day and night, that thou mayest
 " observe to do according to all that is
 " written therein; for then thou shalt
 " make thy way prosperous, and then
 " thou shalt have good success. Have
 " not I commanded thee, be strong, and
 " of good courage. Be not afraid, nei-
 " ther be thou dismayed, for the Lord
 " thy God is with thee whithersoever
 " thou goest." Psal. cxix. ver. 98, 99,
 100. " Thou through thy commandments
 " has made me wiser than mine enemies,
 " for they are ever with me. I have
 " more understanding than all my teach-
 " ers, for thy Testimonies are my medita-
 " tion. I understand more than the an-
 " cients, because I keep thy precepts."
 Ver. 23, 24. " Princes also did sit and
 " speak against me, but thy servant did
 " meditate

“ meditate in thy statutes. Thy testi-
 “ monies also are my delight, and my
 “ counsellors.” (Ver. 111.) “ Thy testi-
 “ monies have I taken as an heritage for
 “ ever, for they are the rejoicings of my
 “ heart.”

*A more effectual Method for the suppressing of
 Vice and Immorality, and for the Encour-
 agement of Religion and Virtue; or, the
 surest Way to secure a lasting Peace, and
 National Prosperity.*

Levit. xxvi. 3. “ **I**f you walk in my
 “ statutes, and keep
 “ my commandments, and do them;—
 “ (ver. 4.) Then I will give you rain in
 “ due season, and the land shall yield her
 “ encrease.—(Ver. 6.) And I will give
 “ peace in the land, and ye shall ly
 “ down, and none shall make you afraid.
 “ —(Ver. 7.) And ye shall chase your
 “ enemies, and they shall fall before you
 “ by the sword.—(Ver. 12.) And I will
 “ be your God, and ye shall be my people.
 “ (Ver. 23, 24, 25.) And if ye will not
 “ be reformed by me by these things, but
 “ will walk contrary to me, then will I
 “ also walk contrary to you; and will pu-
 “ nish.”

“ nish you yet seven times for your sins.
 “ And I will bring a sword upon you, that
 “ shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant.
 “ And when you are gathered together
 “ within your cities, I will send the pesti-
 “ lence among you ; and ye shall be de-
 “ livered into the hand of the enemy.”
 “ —(Jonah 3. 5.) So the people of Nine-
 “ veh believed God, and proclaimed a
 “ fast, and put on sackcloth from the
 “ greatest of them, even unto the least of
 “ them.—(Ver. 6.) For word came unto
 “ the king of Nineveh, and he arose from
 “ his throne, and he laid his robe from
 “ him, and covered him with sackcloth,
 “ and sat in ashes.—(Ver. 7.) And he
 “ caused it to be published and proclaim-
 “ ed through Nineveh, (by the decree of
 “ the king and his nobles) Saying, let
 “ neither man nor beast, herd nor flock,
 “ taste any thing ; let them not feed nor
 “ drink water.—(Ver. 8.) But let man
 “ and beast be covered with sackcloth,
 “ and cry mightily unto God ; yea, let
 “ them turn every one from his evil
 “ way, and from the violence that is in
 “ their hands.—(Ver. 9.) Who can tell
 “ if God will turn and repent, and turn
 “ away from his fierce anger, that we
 “ perish.

“ perish not.—(Ver. 10.) And God saw
 “ their works, that they turned from
 “ their evil way; and God repented of
 “ the evil he said he would do to them;
 “ and he did it not.”

Nob. Whether are you going to lecture
 or to preach?

Farm. I am going to do neither, my
 Lord. The Scripture says, “ Whatso-
 “ ever was written afore time, was writ-
 “ ten for our learning.” And in confor-
 mity to this high and important intima-
 tion from heaven, I am going to make a
 few observations on these passages above
 recited, which may not be altogether un-
 profitable, and which I esteem to be the
 duty of all men, without running the ha-
 zard of an encroachment upon the priest’s
 office; after which I mean to entertain
 your Lordship with what, I hope, will
 not be unacceptable, namely, A large quo-
 tation from the celebrated Dr Swift, wrote
 in the reign of Queen Anne; and altho’
 more peculiarly adapted to that reign,
 may afford matter not altogether unin-
 structive to the present age; and which
 I find so entirely agreeable to my own
 sentiments, that I am constrained to adopt
 it in preference to any thing else of the
 kind

kind I have hitherto examined into or seen.

The above quotations from Scripture I have purposely drawn into view, to hold up as a glass, in which may be read the fate of great Britain, according to the tenor of her present and future conduct in life. If we are willing to be reformed, and duly to regard the divine statutes and commandments, and to make the whole of his laws the constant rule of our conduct in life, then are we promised favourable seasons, that the earth may yield a suitable increase, and that there may be abundance for man and beast. We are also promised the inestimable blessings of peace, and that we shall ly down in safety, and none shall make us afraid; and if at any time we are unjustly invaded by our enemies, they shall be given into our hands, shall fall before us by the sword, and shall be driven before our armies as chaff before the wind. But if in defect of duty, and hating to be reformed, we shall still persist in our impious courses, trample on his laws, and walk contrary to him, then will he also walk contrary to us, will punish us seven times more for our sins than he hath hitherto done, will

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bring

giving a sword upon us to avenge the quarrel of his covenant, and in perfect contempt of the strength of our allies, the number of our armies, and strength of our fleets; and all these seconded by, and conducted under the finest and most accomplished schemes of human policy and wisdom; yet, we shall come down more mightily than ever we did arise, and what of our overthrow is unfinished by the sword, famine and pestilence shall accomplish the rest. If we will not believe these momentous truths with application to our own case, let us read them in the fatal experience of the most mighty empires in past ages. If numerous armies, brazen gates, impregnable walls, had been unquestionable security to the impious Belsazzar, needed he to be under any alarm for the army of Cyrus; yet never was his destruction so near as in that very period he was rejoicing in his unquestioned security. If Darius must come short both of victory and safety too, tho' defended by the victorious and invincible arms of 1100,000 Persians, and this terrible defeat and destructive overthrow received from none other than a handful of Macedonians, (though led by Philip's war-like

like son) upon what degree of human power may we depend hereafter for success? O Britannia! (still bleeding in thy late wounds, received from the hands of thine own children) wilt thou again adventure into the field, before thou renewest thy friendship with thine ancient Almighty Ally. Did he not write vanity and vexation, shame and disgrace, desolation and loss upon thy last labours in the bloody field? O Britannia! Were thy princely sons but duly attentive to the weight of Omnipotence, in the balance of power. But how is the gold become dim? How is the most fine gold changed? Thy princely sons, once so famous for their generous and patriotic spirits, would they duly attend to these two grand and fundamental points, to remove every oppressive weight at present in their power, and, with equal ardour, press an impartial, universal, and thorough reformation upon the dissolute lives of thy degenerated sons, and endeavour to restore that ancient piety, which once did render thee the glory of all lands. How soon would He recover to thee the sullied lustre of thy once victorious arms, make thy victories as certain as the combat, and

thee to trample the power, policy,
 and arms of all thine enemies under thy
 feet. O Britain ! Has not the wakeful
 eyes of thy most Gracious Sovereign been
 particularly attentive to these important
 matters ? How richly described in the
 late Royal Proclamation for the suppres-
 sion of vice, and encouragement of religi-
 on and virtue. Wilt thou be outdone by
 heathen Nineveh ? How attentive were
 they to the Royal Mandate of their earth-
 ly Sovereign ? Did they not cry mighti-
 ly to God ? Did they not turn every one
 from the evil of his ways, and from the
 violence that was in their hands ? And
 did not that adorable and benignant Ma-
 jesty repent of the evil He said he would
 do unto them, and He did it not ?

*From the Works of the celebrated Dean Swift,
 written about the beginning of the present
 century.*

“ **A** MONG all the schemes offered to the
 public in this projecting age, I have
 observed, with much concern, that there have
 never been any for the improvement of
 religion and morals, which, besides the
 piety of the design, from the consequences
 of

of such a reformation in a future life, would be the best natural means for advancing the public felicity of the state, as well as the present happiness of every individual. For as much as faith and morality are declined among us, I am altogether confident they might, in a short time, and with no very great trouble, be raised to as high a perfection as numbers are capable of receiving. Indeed the method is so easy and obvious, and some present opportunities so good, that, in order to have this project reduced to practice, there seems to want nothing more than to put those in mind, who, by their honour, duty, and interest, are chiefly concerned. But, because it is idle to propose remedies before we are assured of the disease, or to be in fear till we are convinced of the danger, I shall first show in general, That the nation is extremely corrupted in religion and morals; and then I will offer a short scheme for the reformation of both. As to the first, I know it is reckoned but a form of speech, when divines complain of the wickedness of the age; however, I believe, upon a fair comparison with other times and countries, it will be found an undoubted truth: For,

first, to deliver nothing but plain matter of fact, without exaggeration or satire, I suppose it will be granted, that many of our people of quality and gentry hardly appear to act by any principle of religion, that too many of them do almost discard it, and are ready to own their disbelief of all revelation, in ordinary discourse; nor is the case any better among the vulgar, especially in great towns, where their prophaneness and ignorance are to a degree hard to be imagined greater.

Then it is observed abroad, that no race of mortals hath so little sense of religion as the English soldiers. To confirm which, I have been often told by great officers of the army, that in the whole compass of their acquaintance, they could not recollect three of their profession who seemed to regard or believe one syllable of the Gospel; and the same at least may be affirmed of the fleet. The consequences of all which upon the actions of men are equally manifest, if we step into other scenes, and consider the fraud and cozenage of trading men, and shop-keepers; that insatiable gulf of oppression and injustice, the law, the open traffic for all civil and military employments, (I wish
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it rested there) without the least regard to merit or qualifications, the corrupt management of men in office; the many detestable abuses in choosing those who represent the people with the management of interests and factions. Among the representatives, to which I must be bold to add, the ignorance of some of the lower clergy, and the mean and servile temper of others.

“ This is a short view of the general depravity among us, without entering into particulars, which would be an endless labour. Now as universal and deep rooted as these seem to be, I am utterly deceived, if an effectual remedy might not be applied to most of them; neither am I at present upon a wild, speculative project, but such a one as may be easily put in execution. For while the prerogative of giving all employments continues in the Crown, either immediately, or by subordination, it is in the power of the Prince to make piety and virtue become the fashion of the age, if, at the same time, he would make them necessary qualifications for favour and preferment.

“ It is clear from present experience, that the bare example of the best Prince will

will not have any mighty influence where the age is very corrupt: For when was there ever a better Prince on the throne than the present Queen. I do not talk of her talent for Government, her love of the people, or any other qualities that are purely regal, but her piety, charity, temperance, conjugal love, and whatever other virtues do most adorn a private life, wherein, without question or flattery, she hath no superior. Yet neither will it be satire, nor peevish invective, to affirm, that infidelity and vice are not much diminished since her coming to the Crown, nor will, in probability, till more effectual remedies are provided. Thus human nature seems to ly under this disadvantage, that the example alone of a vicious Prince will in time corrupt an age, but the example alone of a good one, will not be sufficient to reform it without further endeavours. Princes must therefore supply this defect by a vigorous exercise of that authority which the law hath left them. By making it every man's interest and honour to cultivate religion and virtue, by rendering vice a disgrace, and the certain ruin to preferment, or pretensions. All which they should first attempt in their own

own Courts and families. For example, might not the Queen's domestics of the middle and lower sort, be obliged, upon penalty of suspension, or loss of their employment, to a constant weekly attendance on the service of the Church, and to a decent behaviour in it; to receive the Sacrament; to avoid swearing, and irreligious profane discourses, and to the appearance, at least, of temperance and chastity? Might not the care of all this be committed to the strict inspection of proper officers? Might not those of higher rank, and nearer access to her Majesty, receive her own commands to the same purpose, and be countenanced, or disfavoured, according as they obey? Might not the Queen lay her injunctions on the Bishops, and other great men of undoubted piety, to make diligent inquiry, and give her notice, if any person about her should happen to be of libertine principles, or morals? Might not all those who enter upon any office, in her Majesty's service, be obliged to take an oath parallel with that against Simony, which is administered to the Clergy? It is not to be doubted, but that if those, or the like proceedings, were duly observed, morality and religion would

would soon become fashionable Court virtues, and be taken up as the only methods to get or keep employments there, which alone would have mighty influence upon many of the Nobility and principal Gentry. But if the like methods were pursued as far as possible with regard to those who are in the great employments of State, it is hard to conceive how general a reformation they might in time produce among us. For if piety and virtue were once reckoned qualifications necessary to preferment, every man thus endowed, when put into great stations, would readily imitate the Queen's example in the distribution of all offices in his disposal, especially if any apparent transgression, through favour or partiality, would be imputed to him for a misdemeanor, by which he must certainly forfeit his favour and station; and their being such great numbers in employment, scattered through every town and county in this kingdom, if all these were exemplary in the conduct of their lives, things would soon take a new face, and religion receive a mighty encouragement. Nor would the public welfare be less advanced, since, of nine offices in ten that are ill executed, the defect

fect is not in capacity or understanding, but in common honesty. I know no employment for which religion disqualifies any man; and, if it did, I doubt the objection would not be very seasonably offered at present, because it is perhaps too just a reflection, that, in the disposal of places, the question, Whether a person be fit for what he is recommended to, is generally the last thing that is thought upon, or regarded?

“ I have often imagined that something parallel to the office of censors, anciently in Rome, would be of mighty use among us, and could be easily limited from running into any exorbitancies. The Romans understood liberty as well as we, and were as jealous of it, and upon every occasion as bold assertors; yet I do not remember to have read any great complaints of the abuses in that office, among them, but many admirable effects of it are left upon record. There are several pernicious vices frequent and notorious among us; that escape or elude the punishment of any law at all against them: Such as atheism, drunkenness, fraud, avarice, and several others, which, by this institution, wisely regulated, might be much reformed.

ed. Suppose, for example, itinerary commissioners were appointed to inspect every where throughout the kingdom, into the conduct (at least) of men in office, with respect to their morals and religion, as well as their abilities, to receive the complaints and informations that should be offered against them, and make their report here upon oath to the Court, or to the Ministry, who should reward or punish accordingly. I avoid entering into the particulars of this, or any other scheme, which, coming from a private hand, might be liable to many defects, but would soon be digested by the wisdom of the nation, and surely L. 6000 a-year would not be ill laid out among as many Commissioners, duly qualified, who, in three divisions, should be personally obliged to take their yearly circuit for that purpose. But this is beside my present design, which was only to shew what degree of reformation is in the power of the Queen, without the interposition of the Legislature, and which her Majesty is, without question, obliged in conscience to endeavour by her authority, as much as she doth by her practice.

It will be easily granted, that the example

ample of this great city hath a mighty influence over the whole kingdom; and it is as manifest, that the city is equally influenced by the Court and the Ministry, and those who, by their employments, or their hopes, depend upon them. Now, if under so excellent a Princess as the present Queen, we would suppose a family strictly regulated as I have above proposed, a Ministry, where every single person was of distinguished piety;—if we should suppose all great offices of State and law filled after the same manner, and with such as were equally diligent in chusing persons, who, in their several subordinations, would be obliged to follow the example of their superiors, under the penalty of loss of favour and place; will not every body grant, that the empire of vice and irreligion would soon be destroyed within this metropolis, and receive a terrible blow through the whole island, which hath so great an intercourse with it, and so much affects to follow its fashions. For if religion were once understood to be the necessary step to favour and preferment, can it be imagined that any would openly offend against it, who had the least regard for his reputation? There is no quality

to contrary to any nature which men cannot affect and put on upon occasion, in order to serve an interest, or gratify a prevailing passion. The proudest man will personate humility, the morosest learn to flatter; the laziest will be sedulous and active, where he is in pursuit of what he hath much at heart; How ready therefore would most men be, to step into the paths of virtue and piety, if they infallibly lead to favour and preferment? If swearing and profaneness, scandalous and avowed lewdness, excessive gaming and intemperance, were a little discountenanced in the army, I cannot readily see what ill consequence could be apprehended. If gentlemen of that profession were at least obliged to some external decorum in their conduct, or even if a profligate life and character were not a means of advancement, and the appearance of piety a most infallible hinderance, it is impossible the corruptions there should be so universal and exorbitant. I have been assured by several officers, that no troops abroad are so ill disciplined as the English, which cannot well be otherwise, while the common soldiers have perpetually before their eyes the vicious example of their leaders; and

and it is hardly possible for those to commit any crime whereof these are not infinitely more guilty, and with far less temptation.

“ It is commonly charged upon the gentlemen of the army, that the beastly vice of drinking to excess hath been lately, from their example, restored among us, which, for some years before, was almost dropt in England; but whoever the introducers were, they have succeeded to a miracle, many of the young Nobility and Gentry are already become great proficients, and are under no manner of concern to hide their talent, but are got beyond all sense of shame, or fear of reproach. This might soon be remedied, if the Queen would think fit to declare, that no young persons of quality whatsoever, who was notoriously given to that, or any other vice, should be capable of her favour, or even admitted into her presence; with positive command to her Ministers, and others in great office, to treat them in the same manner; after which, all men who had any regard for their reputation, or any prospect of preferment, would avoid their commerce. This would quickly make that vice so

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scandalous,

scandalous, that those who could no subdue, would at least endeavour to disguise it.

“ The reformation of the Stage also is in the power of the Queen, and in the consequences it has upon the minds of the people, doth very well deserve her strictest care, besides the indecent and prophane passages. Besides the perpetual turning into ridicule the very function of the priesthood, with other irregularities in most modern comedies, which have been often objected to, it is worth observing, the distributive justice of the authors, which is constantly applied to the punishment of virtue, and the reward of vice ; directly opposite to the rules of their best critics, as well as to the practice of dramatic Poets in all ages and countries. For example, a country squire who is represented with no other vice but that of being a clown, and having the provincial accent upon his tongue, which is neither a fault, nor in his power to remedy, must be condemned to marry a cast wench, or a cracked chamber-maid. On the other hand, a rake-hell of the town, whose character is set off with no other accomplishment, but excessive prodigality, prophaneness and intemperance,

temperance, and lust, is rewarded with a lady of great fortune to repair his own, which his vices had almost ruined. And as in a tragedy, the hero is represented to have obtained many victories, in order to raise his character in the minds of the spectators, so the hero of a comedy is represented to have been victorious in all his intrigues for the same reason. I do not remember that our English poets ever suffered a criminal amour to succeed upon the Stage till the reign of Charles II. Ever since that time, the alderman is made a cuckold, the deluded virgin is debauched, and adultery and fornication are supposed to be committed behind the scenes. As part of the action, these, and many more corruptions of the Theatre, peculiar to our age and nation, need continue no longer than while the Court is content to connive at, or neglect them. Surely a pension would not be ill employed on some men of wit, learning, and virtue, who might have power to strike out every offensive and unbecoming passage from plays already written, as well as those that may be offered to the Stage for the future; by which, and other wise regulations, the Theatre might become a very innocent

and useful diversion, instead of being a scandal and reproach to our religion and country.

“ The proposals I have hitherto made for the advancement of religion and morality are such as come within the reach of administration, such as a pious, active prince, with a steady resolution, might soon bring to effect. Neither am I aware of any objections to be raised against what I have advanced, unless it should be thought, that making religion a necessary step to interest and favour, might increase hypocrisy among us, and I readily believe it would; but if one in twenty should be brought over to true piety by this or the like methods, and the other nineteen be only hypocrites, the advantage would still be great. Besides, hypocrisy is much more eligible than open infidelity and vice. It wears the livery of religion; it acknowledgeth her authority,—is cautious of giving scandal: Nay, a long continued disguise is too great a constraint upon human nature, especially upon English dispositions. Men would leave off their vices out of mere weariness rather than undergo the toil and hazard, and, perhaps, the expence of practising them in private; and
I believe

I believe it is often with religion as with love, which, by much dissembling, becomes real.

“ All other projects to this great end have proved hitherto ineffectual; laws against immorality have not been executed, and proclamations, occasionally issued out to enforce them, are wholly unregarded as things of form. But that some effectual attempt should be made toward such a reformation is, perhaps, more necessary than people commonly apprehend; because the ruin of a State is often preceded by an universal degeneracy of manners, and contempt of religion, which is intirely our case at present.

“ Neither is this a matter to be deferred till a more convenient time of peace and leisure. A reformation in mens faith and morals is the best natural, as well as religious means, either to bring war to a good conclusion, or even to preserve the blessings of peace; because, if men in trust performed their duty for conscience sake, affairs would not suffer through fraud, falsehood, and neglect, as they now perpetually do; and if they believed a God and his providence, and acted accordingly, they might reasonably hope for his

his divine assistance in so just a cause as ours.

“ Nor could the majesty of the English Crown appear, upon any occasion, in a greater lustre, either to foreigners or subjects, than by an administration, which, producing such great effects, would discover so much power; and power being the natural appetite of princes, a limited monarch cannot so well gratify it in any thing as a strict execution of the laws.

“ The many corruptions at present in every branch of business are almost inconceivable; but what remedy can be found in a constitution like ours for such grievances, but to bring religion into countenance, and encourage those, who, from the hope of future reward, and dread of future punishment, will be moved to act with justice and integrity.

“ This is not to be accomplished any other way than by introducing religion as much as possible to be the turn and fashion of the age, which only lies in the power of administration; the Prince, with the utmost strictness regulating the Court, the Ministry, and other persons in great employment; and these, by their example and authority, reforming all who have

have dependance on them. It is certain, that a reformation successfully carried on in this great city would, in time, spread itself over the whole kingdom. Since most of the considerable youth pass here that season of their lives wherein the strongest impressions are made, in order to improve education, or advance their fortune; and those among them who return into their several countries, are sure to be followed and imitated as the general pattern of wit and good breeding.

“ And if things were once in this train, that is, if virtue and religion were established as the necessary titles to reputation and preferment, and if vice and infidelity were not only loaden with infamy, but made the infallible ruin of all mens pretensions, our duty, by becoming our interest, would take root in our natures, and mix with the very genius of our people, so that it would not be easy for the example of one wicked Prince, to bring us back to our former corruptions.

“ I have confined myself (as it is before observed) to these methods, for the advancement of piety, which are in the power of a Prince, limited like ours, by a strict execution of the laws in force; and
this

this is enough for a project that comes without any name or recommendation, I doubt a great deal more than will be suddenly reduced into practice, though, if any disposition should appear toward so good a work, it is certain, that the assistance of the legislative power would be necessary to make it more compleat. But to leave these airy imaginations, of introducing new laws for the amendment of mankind, what I principally insist on is a due execution of the old, which ly wholly in the Crown, and in the authority derived from thence; I return, therefore, to my former assertion, That if stations of power, trust, profit and honour, were constantly made rewards of virtue and piety, such an administration must needs have a mighty influence on the morals of the whole kingdom; and men of great abilities would then endeavour to excel in the duties of a religious life, in order to qualify themselves for public service. I may possibly be wrong in some of the means I prescribe towards this end, but that is no material objection against the design itself: Let those who are at the helm contrive it better, which perhaps they may easily do. Every body will agree, that the disease is manifest,

manifest, as well as dangerous, that some remedy is necessary; and that none yet applied hath been effectual, which is a sufficient excuse for any man who wishes well to his country, to offer his thoughts, when he can have no other end but the public good. The present Queen is a Princess of as many and great virtues as ever filled a Throne: How would it brighten her character in the present and after ages, if she would exert her utmost authority to instil some of those virtues into her people, which they are too degenerate to learn only from her example. And be it spoken with all the veneration possible for so excellent a Sovereign, her best endeavours in this weighty affair is a most important part of her duty, as well as of her interest, and her honour.

" Fidelity to a present establishment is indeed the principal means to defend it from a foreign enemy; but without other qualifications will not prevent corruptions from within; and states are more often ruined by these than the other. To conclude, whether the proposals I have offered toward a reformation, be such as are most prudent and convenient, may probably be a question; but it is none at all,

Whether

Whether some reformation be absolutely necessary? because the nature of things is such, that if abuses is not remedied, they will certainly increase, nor never stop till they end in the subversion and ruin of the commonwealth. As there will always of necessity be some corruptions, so, in a well instituted state, the executive power will be always contending against them, by reducing things (as Machiavel speaks) to their first principles. Never letting abuses grow inveterate, or multiply so far that it will be hard to find remedies, and perhaps impossible to apply them; as he that would keep his house in repair, must attend every little breach or flaw, and supply it immediately, else time alone will bring all to ruin, How much more the common accidents of storm and rain? He must live in perpetual danger of his house falling about his ears, and will find it cheaper to throw it quite down, and build it entirely from the ground, perhaps upon a new foundation, or, at least, in a new form, which may neither be so safe nor convenient as the old."

My Lord, there are three doctrines here taught by Dr. Swift, very observable, and which,

which, as already said, although wrote about the beginning of this century, and peculiarly adapted to that age, may afford matter not altogether unsuitable to the present times; and therefore, so far as they will apply, we will endeavour to make application of them for our own use and benefit.

The first is, That we, as a nation, are extremely corrupted in our religion and morals.

Secondly, That no remedy hitherto applied hath been effectual.

Thirdly, That, according to the sentiments of Dr Swift, the open traffic in that age for all civil and military employments, without regard to merit or qualifications, was the alone source of all that corruption, depravity, and degeneracy of manners, into which the nation was then sunk.

Lastly, The Doctor proposes a remedy, which consists in this, That, as the prerogative of giving all employments continues in the Crown, either immediately or by subordination, it is in the power of the Prince (says he) to make piety and virtue become the fashion of the age, if, at the same time, he would make them necessary qualifications for favour and preferment.

ferment. This he judged expedient, because it was clear from the experience of that age, (and it is equally clear from the experience of the present,) that the bare example of the best of princes will not have any powerful influence, where the age is very corrupt. Therefore (says he) princes once finding all other remedies ineffectual, may supply this defect by a vigorous exercise of that authority which the law has left them, by making it every man's interest and honour to cultivate religion and virtue, by rendering vice a disgrace, and the certain ruin to preferment or pretensions. All which (says the Doctor) they will first attempt in their own courts and families.

But there is no sentiment of the Doctor's I do so much admire as his desire to see itinerary commissioners appointed to inspect every where throughout the kingdom, into the conduct (at least) of men in office, with respect to their morals and religion, as well as their abilities; — to receive the complaints and informations that should be offered against them, and make their report upon oath; to the Court, or to the Ministry, who should reward or punish accordingly.

My

My Lord, what admirable effects might not such a noble institution as this produce. Such an institution I should not only esteem a token for good, but the most certain forerunner of our thorough reformation, and complete recovery from all our misery. Some such reformation as this, no doubt, was adopted by heathen Nineveh, which we could only consider as little more than purely external; yet such was the benignity of their gracious Creator, that their city was saved by their external reformation. Did the dim light of nature teach them how to appease their incensed Creator, and shall they not rise up against us and condemn us, if we, under the brightest sunshine of divine revelation, shall, notwithstanding, come short of them.

But the Doctor proceeds. Surely (says he) L. 6000 a-year would not be ill laid out among as many commissioners, duly qualified, who, in three divisions, should be personally obliged to take their yearly circuit for that purpose.

Duly qualified.—My Lord, How important is the meaning of these words; was the measure adopted; yet the fate of the whole nation depends upon the wisdom of the choice. Were no more regard

paid to the qualifications of the persons chosen into this commission, than to the qualities of the persons chosen into many other offices, their ministration could be of no real use to the nation. Were they corrupt, or capable of being corrupted, the whole nation might sink under the increasing degeneracy of its manners. Were they duly qualified, what happy effects might it not produce. But what are the needful qualifications of these? Surely the same as in all other magistrates. But we will consult Moses father-in-law. If the noble Generalissimo of the Jewish army disdained not his counsel, although under the divine inspiration himself, much less should we. Let us attend then to this venerable Midianite, *Exod. xviii. 21.* —
 “ Moreover thou shalt provide out of all
 “ the people, able men, such as fear
 “ God, men of truth, hating covetous-
 “ ness, and place such over them. — Thou
 “ shalt provide out of all the people.” —
 No partial restrictions to particular places, or persons, no, not to friends, to provide them with fortunes, or invest them with offices they are unfit to possess. But if thou shouldest ransack all Israel, from
 Dan

Don to Bersheba, chuse none but such as have the spirit of their office.

Able men.— This may no doubt imply wealth, and opulent circumstances, as needful to lift them above contempt, but does undoubtedly refer more chiefly to great abilities of mind, or to the possession of all those talents and virtues which are needful to accomplish the great magistrats.

Such as fear God.— My Lord, How needful is this qualification in all ranks of men, but more especially in rulers, judges, magistrates, overseers, &c. Who can be truly faithful to King or people, that are void of the fear of God. There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man, (says the Word,) the same word pronounces him an unjust judge.—Why so?—He did justice to the widow.—Yes, in the conclusion.—Why then is he called unjust?—First, because his pride, sloth, and aversion to justice, disposed him to be tedious and dilatory in pronouncing sentence, to weary her out. But she still persisting, with renewed importunity, gave him so much trouble, that the duties of his office compelled him to come to a conclusion. His

motives of action may be gathered from his own words.—Though I fear not God, (says he) nor regards man, yet, because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest, by her continual coming, she weary me.

But is it possible, my Lord, for a judge, to be just without the fear of God? Not in every respect surely. The word *justice*, in its fullest latitude and meaning, is more comprehensive than we are aware. It is the highest point of justice to give God his due; and, I am afraid, it is in this sense chiefly that the Scripture pronounces him unjust. If judges then, my Lord, are duly attentive to a just defence of the lives and properties of men, strictly attentive in the distribution of justice, to render unto all according to the merit or demerit of the cause, this is so far well; but if he is regardless of the honour and dignity of the divine Majesty, his Name blasphemed, his Sabbaths prophaned, his worship contemned, or neglected; his Word despised, and made the subject of profane jests; if drunkenness, adulteries, fornications, if all, or any such external outbreakings, are passed over, and unregarded by the civil power, though sub-
ject

ject to its controul, Wherein, my Lord,
 lies the justice of such a procedure? Was
 blasphemy, adultery, &c. punished with
 death by the Divine law under the Old
 Testament dispensation? And have we a
 toleration to trample on such laws under
 the Gospel? Is a trifling part of the
 goods, or property of men, unjustly in-
 vaded, punished with death? And when
 the glorious and fearful Name of God is
 prophanelly trampled under foot, Is this
 unworthy of notice? I know no extor-
 nal transgression against either the first or
 second Table of the Law but is justly pun-
 ishable by the civil power; and which, if
 neglected, is a contempt of the Sovereign
 authority of the Great Lawgiver. But if
 such enormities, of whatever kind or de-
 gree, are committed beyond the reach of
 human evidence, or such conviction as
 might lead to punishment, such transgres-
 sion can only be considered as personal;
 and the offender exposed to Divine punish-
 ment in a personal capacity only; and the
 justice of the civil magistrate cannot be
 impeached; but if evidence of such a
 transgression can be obtained, and the of-
 fender brought to punishment, but no ac-
 count made of his transgression, then is
 the

the sin national,—the judges' sin as well as the offenders; and the honour of God being invaded by the offender, but set at nought by the civil magistrate, who is the minister of God for the punishment of evil doers, but bearing the sword in vain, and false to his trust, the transgression, therefore, becomes national, and exposes the kingdom to national judgements.

Men of truth — A most endearing qualification in all men, but especially in rulers, judges, magistrates, &c. This divine virtue will always dispose the upright judge, the man of truth, to labour to see all causes in their just light, and patiently to wait for, and admit every possible evidence needful to clear up the truth, and to see through the sophistry and false glosses of the greatest orators, when basely employed to darken and obscure the truth; witness that nonfuch character Job, who breathes the true spirit of the renowned magistrate, Job xix. "I was a father to the poor, and the cause which I knew not, I searched out." My Lord, I cannot pass this august and venerable character without taking a fuller view of its author, both in his public capacity and private estate. View this great man in the

the latter, he heaps up silver as the dust;
 he washes his steps in butter, and the rock
 pours him out rivers of oil. View him
 in the former, Princes revere his digni-
 ty, and the aged listen to his wisdom.
 Every eye beholds him with delight;
 every tongue loads him with blessings.
 View him in his domestic circumstances,
 on one hand he is defended by a troop
 of sons, on the other adorned with a train
 of daughters; and on all sides surrounded
 by a very great household, chap. xxix.

“ When I went out to the gate through
 “ the city, when I prepared my seat in
 “ the street, the young men saw me and
 “ hid themselves, and the aged arose
 “ and stood up: The Princes refrained
 “ talking, and laid their hand upon their
 “ mouth: The Nobles held their peace,
 “ and their tongue cleaved to the roof of
 “ their mouth. When the ear heard me,
 “ than it blessed me; and when the eye
 “ saw me, than it gave witness to me;
 “ because I delivered the poor, that cry-
 “ ed, and the fatherless, and him that
 “ had none to help: The blessing of him
 “ that was ready to perish came upon me,
 “ and I caused the widows heart to sing
 “ for joy. I put on righteousness, and
 “ it

"it clothed me: My judgement was as
 "a robe and diadem. I was eyes to the
 "blind, and feet was I to the lame:
 "I was a father to the poor, and the
 "cause which I knew not, I searched
 "out; and I brake the jaws of the wick-
 "ed, and plucked the spoil out of his
 "teeth. Unto me men gave ear, and
 "waited, and kept silence: At my coun-
 "sel, after my words, they spake not
 "again, and they waited for me as for
 "the rain; and they opened their mouth
 "wide as for the latter rain. I chuse
 "out their way; and sat chief; and
 "dwelt as a king in the army, as one
 "that comforteth the mourners."

My Lord, What lustre and dignity ap-
 pears in this great man! How is every
 common badge of modern greatness dark-
 ened here as stars before the sun! What
 is even the tedious pomp that waits on
 princes, of horses led, and grooms be-
 rear'd with gold, compared with the virtues,
 the splendor, the godlike excellencies of
 this venerable ancient!

Hating covetousness. Such an illustrious
 judge as this has neither a heart to wish,
 a hand to receive, nor a pocket to hold a
 bribe..

And

~~And place such men~~ Indeed, my Lord, to commit this charge to men void of suitable qualifications, or even to bear rule in any other line, is committing the sheep to the care of the wolf, and employing Satan, as minister, to pull down the empire of sin.

By this time, I dare say, your Lordship will find no difficulty in joining sentiments with Dr Swift in this. That if such wholesome measures were adopted in the filling up of offices and choice of magistrates, together with commissioners suitably qualified for inspection of their conduct,—the empire of vice must not only be destroyed in our metropolis, the fountain-head of power, but also receive a terrible blow through the whole island, which have so great an intercourse with it, and so much affects to follow its fashions. For if religion were once understood to be the necessary step to favour and preferment, could it be imagined that any would openly offend against it, who had the least regard for his fortune or reputation. How readily would men step into the paths of piety and virtue if they infallibly led to favour and fortune. All other projects (says the Doctor) to this great end have hitherto

hitherto proved ineffectual. Laws against immorality have not been executed, and proclamations occasionally issued out to enforce them, have been wholly unregarded as things of form. But that some effectual attempt should be made toward such a reformation, is perhaps more necessary than people commonly apprehend; because the ruin of a state is generally preceded by an universal degeneracy of manners, and contempt of religion, which is entirely our case at this day.

Nob. But would not the two kingdoms be a charge full too much for the six commissioners proposed by Dr Swift, for inspection of the conduct of men in office, which, considering the extent of the charge, two only could be allotted for Scotland, and four for England, and many trespasses might escape their utmost vigilance.

Farm. Indeed, my Lord, had the Doctor said sixty commissioners, in place of six, I dare say the two kingdoms would find sufficient work for them all; which, appointing twenty for Scotland, and forty for England,—(dividing Scotland into ten districts, perhaps including three counties into each, and each district the charge of

of two commissioners; and dividing England into twenty districts, each division having the charge of two commissioners; and their salaries might be less, by being freed from a wide and extensive circuit. L. 200 a-year might do very well, which altogether would amount to L. 12,000, which money, if so bestowed upon zealous and faithful men, would be a far greater charity and service in behalf of the kingdom than an L. 100,000 dispersed among the poor.

And now my Lord, when almost concluding this essay, an important occurrence takes place, which gives me much pleasure, and brings fresh to my remembrance an old objection mentioned by your Lordship, namely, That a too close connection established between this system and the interests, duties, and precepts of religion, would bring it into disesteem, and make it more the subject of scorn than universal regard. While I was pondering whether I could possibly make any abridgement of that kind, without injury to the noble cause, and even to truth itself, forth comes the Royal Proclamation, like an angelic embassy from the Court of heaven, containing his Majesty's most gra-

cious and royal purpose, of giving every possible encouragement to piety and virtue, and suppressing and punishing vice, prophaneness, and immorality in all persons without exception, by which I was abundantly encouraged to hold to my first sentiments, and humbly hope I shall be kept from advancing any thing that is not found the echo of the said proclamation, and, in every branch thereof, easily reducible to the same. The above declaration of the Royal Mind is so abundantly expressive of the most ardent and parental regard to the prosperity and welfare of his people in this life, and happiness in that which is to come, as must create in every generous Briton's heart the warmest love, and firmest attachment to his Royal Person and government. My Lord, What would the primitive Christians have given, in those early and persecuting ages, to have heard such a declaration from the Thrones of those ages?—to have heard that sentence from their Princes lips, “ We will upon all occasions distinguish “ persons of piety and virtue, by marks “ of our Royal Favour.” But as we can give no description of the said Proclamation that is fit to do justice to the same,

same, we will insert it at large, as worthy of the most distinguished place in any plan of reform; and which I would esteem a most special service done the young and rising generation, to read the said Proclamation in their hearing at home every Lord's day.

*“ By the King, a PROCLAMATION, for the
 “ encouragement of Piety and Virtue, and
 “ for preventing and punishing of Vice,
 “ Prophaneness, and Immorality.*

“ GEORGE R.

*“ **W**HEREAS, we cannot but observe
 “ with inexpressible concern,
 “ the rapid progress of impiety and licen-
 “ tiousness, and that deluge of prophane-
 “ ness, immorality, and every kind of
 “ vice, which, to the scandal of our holy
 “ religion, and to the evil example of
 “ our loving subjects, hath broken in
 “ upon this nation: We therefore esteem-
 “ ing it our indispensable duty to exert
 “ the authority committed to us for the
 “ suppression of these spreading evils, fear-
 “ ing lest that they should provoke God's
 “ wrath and indignation against us, and
 “ humbly acknowledging that we cannot
 “ expect*

“ expect the blessing and goodness of Al-
 “ mighty God (by whom Kings reign,
 “ and on which we entirely rely) to make
 “ our reign happy and prosperous to our-
 “ self and our people, without a religious
 “ observance of God’s holy laws : To the
 “ intent that religion, piety and good
 “ manners, may (according to our most
 “ hearty desire) flourish and increase un-
 “ der our administration and govern-
 “ ment, have thought fit, by the advice
 “ of our Privy Council, to issue this our
 “ Royal Proclamation, and do hereby de-
 “ clare our royal purpose and resolution
 “ to discountenance and punish all man-
 “ ner of vice, prophaneness, and immora-
 “ lity, in all persons of whatsoever de-
 “ gree or quality, within this our realm,
 “ and particularly in such as are employed
 “ near our royal person ; and that for the
 “ encouragement of religion and morality,
 “ we will, upon all occasions, distinguish
 “ persons of piety and virtue, by marks
 “ of our royal favour : And we do expect
 “ and require, That all persons of honour,
 “ or in place of authority, will give good
 “ example by their own piety and virtue,
 “ and to their utmost contribute to the
 “ discountenancing persons of dissolute and
 “ debauched

“ debauched lives, that they, being re-
“ duced by that means to shame and con-
“ tempt for their loose and evil actions
“ and behaviour, may be thereby also
“ enforced the sooner to reform their ill
“ habits and practices, and that the visible
“ displeasure of good men towards them,
“ may (as far as it is possible) supply what
“ the laws (probably) cannot altogether
“ prevent: And we do hereby strictly en-
“ join and prohibit all our loving subjects,
“ of what degree or quality soever, from
“ playing, on the Lord's Day, at dice,
“ cards, or any other game whatsoever,
“ either in public or private houses, or
“ other place or places whatsoever: And
“ we do hereby require and command
“ them, and every of them, decently and
“ reverently to attend the worship of
“ God on the Lord's Day, on pain of
“ our highest displeasure, and of being
“ proceeded against with the utmost ri-
“ gour that may be by law.

“ And for the more effectual reform-
“ ing all such persons, who, by reason of
“ their dissolute lives and conversation,
“ are a scandal to our kingdom, our fur-
“ ther pleasure is, and we do hereby
“ strictly charge and command all our

“ judges, mayors, sheriffs, justices of the
 “ peace, and all other our officers and
 “ ministers, both ecclesiastical and civil,
 “ and all other our subjects, to be very
 “ vigilant and strict, in the discovery
 “ and the effectual prosecution and pu-
 “ nishment of all persons who shall be
 “ guilty of excessive drinking, blasphem-
 “ my, prophane swearing and cursing,
 “ lewdness, profanation of the Lord’s
 “ day, or other dissolute, immoral, or
 “ disorderly practices ; and that they take
 “ care also effectually to suppress all pu-
 “ blic gaming houses, and other loose
 “ and disorderly houses, and also all unlicen-
 “ ced public shews, interludes, and places
 “ of entertainment, using the utmost
 “ caution in licencing the same : Also to
 “ suppress all loose and licentious prints,
 “ books, and publications, dispersing poi-
 “ son to the minds of the young and un-
 “ wary, and to punish the publishers and
 “ venders thereof ; and to put in execu-
 “ tion the statute made in the twenty-
 “ ninth year of the reign of the late
 “ King Charles II. intituled, An act for the
 “ better observation of the Lord’s Day,
 “ commonly called Sunday, and also an
 “ act of Parliament made in the ninth
 “ year

“ year of the reign of the late King
 “ William III. intitled, An act for the
 “ more effectual suppressing of blasphem-
 “ my and prophaneness; and also an act
 “ passed in the twenty-first year of our
 “ reign, intitled, An act for preventing
 “ certain abuses, and profanations on
 “ the Lord’s Day, called Sunday; and
 “ all other laws now in force for the pu-
 “ nishing and suppressing any of the vices
 “ aforesaid, and also to suppress and pre-
 “ vent all gaming whatsoever in public
 “ or private houses on the Lord’s Day;
 “ and likewise that they take effectual
 “ care to prevent all persons keeping ta-
 “ verns, chocolate houses, coffee houses,
 “ or other public houses whatsoever,
 “ from selling wine, chocolate, coffee,
 “ ale, beer, or other liquors, or receiving
 “ or permitting guests to be, or remain
 “ in such their houses in the time of
 “ Divine Service on the Lord’s Day, as
 “ they will answer it to Almighty God,
 “ and upon pain of our highest displea-
 “ sure.

“ And for the more effectual proceed-
 “ ing herein, we do hereby direct and
 “ command all our judges of assize, and ju-
 “ stices of the peace, to give strict charge
 “ at

“ at their respective assizes and sessions,
 “ for the due prosecution and punish-
 “ ment of all persons that shall presume
 “ to offend in any of the crimes afore-
 “ said; and also of all persons that, con-
 “ trary to their duty, shall be remiss or
 “ negligent in putting the said laws in
 “ execution; and that they do, at their
 “ respective assizes and quarter sessions of
 “ the peace, cause this our Royal Pro-
 “ clamation to be publickly read in open
 “ court immediately before the charge is
 “ given.

“ And we do hereby further charge
 “ and command every minister in his re-
 “ spective parish church, or chapel, to
 “ read, or cause to be read, this our Pro-
 “ clamation, at least four times in every
 “ year, immediately after Divine Service,
 “ and to incite, and stir up their respec-
 “ tive auditors to the practice of piety
 “ and virtue, and the avoiding of all im-
 “ morality and prophaneness.

“ And to the end that all vice and de-
 “ bauchery may be prevented, and reli-
 “ gion and virtue practised by all officers,
 “ private soldiers, mariners, and others
 “ who are employed in our service, by
 “ sea or land, we do hereby strictly charge
 “ and

“ and command all our commanders,
 “ and officers whatsoever, that they do
 “ take care to avoid all prophaneness,
 “ debauchery, and other immoralities,
 “ and that by their own good and virtu-
 “ ous lives and conversation, they do set
 “ good examples to all such as are under
 “ their care and authority; and likewise
 “ take care of, and inspect the behaviour
 “ of all such as are under them, and pu-
 “ nish all those who shall be guilty of any
 “ of the offences aforesaid, as they will
 “ be answerable for the ill consequences
 “ of their neglect herein.

“ Given at our Court at St. James's,
 “ the 1st day of June, 1787, in the
 “ 27th year of our reign.

“ GOD SAVE THE KING.”

All that has been advanced in the dis-
 course preceding the Royal Proclamation,
 all that ever shall in future be offered on
 that subject, together with the substance
 of the said Proclamation itself, is fully
 summed up, and contained in the follow-
 ing texts.—Jer. xviii. 7, 8, 9, 10. “ At
 “ what instant I shall speak concerning a
 “ nation, and concerning a kingdom, to
 “ pluck up, and to pull down, and to
 “ destroy.

“ destroy.— If that nation against whom
 “ I have pronounced, turn from their
 “ evil, I will repent of the evil I thought
 “ to do unto them. And at what in-
 “ stant I shall speak concerning a nation,
 “ and concerning a kingdom, to build
 “ and to plant it, if it do evil in my
 “ sight, that it obey not my voice, than
 “ I will repent of the good wherewith
 “ I said I would benefit them.”

If we would give equal credit to the
 Word of the God of truth, as we would
 to the word of an honest man, what need
 we any further question, but that He will
 deal with us expressly according to the
 tenor of this his Word; or according to
 our future conduct towards Him. And
 as the whole of his purpose to us ward
 may be gathered from his Word, so much
 of his mind may be learned from the dis-
 pensations of his Providence towards us.
 If then adverse dispensations are appoint-
 ed, such as the sword, bad seasons, famine,
 epidemical distempers, or pestilence, which
 his Word assures us, are the three fore-
 scourges he makes use of, to punish a
 guilty nation,— if, I say, we are exer-
 cised with either of these, it is a sure to-
 ken of the Divine displeasure on account
 of

of sin ; but favourable dispensations are not to be admitted as proofs, that he is well pleased with us, or that he has no ground of controversy. To learn the true language of such favourable dispensations, we must go to his Word, and from it learn, that, if under these external favours we are still persisting in our impenitent courses, such favours are only some notification of his goodness sent for a time, in order to see whether his goodness will lead us to repentance ; and therefore such favours for a time continued, are only the effects of his darling attribute, to wit, Divine mercy, struggling with Divine justice ; and that moving and pathetic words is the genuine language of such favoured dispensations. How shall I give thee up, O England ! How shall I deliver thee Scotland ! How shall I make thee as Admah ? How set thee as Zeboim. Mine heart is turned within me ; my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger. I will not return to destroy Britain ; for I am God, and not man. And if they will humble themselves, and return to me with their whole heart, I will not enter into the city but as its friend. Such was the

the language of his favour manifested in withdrawing the sword in the late American war, before our ruin was accomplished; yet did he take vengeance on our inventions, while he suffered us (the inventors) to escape. He manifested his high displeasure, to let us see the weakness of the best human councils, and utmost stretch of human wisdom, unassisted by divine; by the loss of thirteen fine provinces, many millions of treasure, and many thousand lives. What then, Will the sons of fair Britannia exclaim against the wisdom of her councils, the conduct of her ministers, the courage of her commanders, and the bravery of her seamen and troops, and arraign the defects of these, as the root of all her misfortunes? Remember, my Friends, not the defects of these, but your sins and mine, the joint iniquities of the whole land, is the root of all our misfortunes, whether of a public or private nature. It was then the sins of Great Britain baffled all her councils, overthrew her armies, scattered her treasures, and rent her territories in pieces; and while we continue in the same impenitent courses, hating to be reformed, we must expect no better success in any future

ture war. Again, for the same gracious purposes before recited, to reclaim us from our wickedness, and lead us to repentance, he was pleased, in the midst of several bad years, and defective crops, to send us one uncommonly rich, in the year 1784, to keep us from extremity, and save us from utter ruin. But what effects has it produced? Are we not still the same? Still unreclaimed. Does not the present dispensations of his Providence say so? Is he not again filling all his dispensations with marks of anger, threatened in the seasons, threatened with the sword, threatened in several parts with epidemical distempers. If in none of all these we will hear the rod, and Him that has appointed it, need we to wonder if the next voice should say, Cut her down, why cumbereth she the ground? If then we would wish to hear better tidings, and things that accompany our safety and prosperity; if to see wisdom shining in our councils, conduct in our ministers, courage in our commanders, and strength in those that turn the battle from our gates; if we would not, by our own incorrigible wickedness, impose a fatal necessity of miscarriage in our councils, and

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overthrow

overthrow of our armies, let us lay the ax
 in time to the root of all our miseries,
 in pushing forward by every possible
 means towards a national reformation.
 We have every possible encouragement for
 that purpose, namely, To piety and good
 morals. The universal Sovereign, from
 whose unmeasurable bounty we receive
 all we hold dear, says, Piety hath the
 promise,—the promise of the good things
 of this life, and of that which is to come.
 His illustrious Vicegerent on Britain's aw-
 ful throne says, We will upon all occasi-
 ons distinguish persons of piety and vir-
 tue by marks of our Royal Favour. And
 even the interest of posterity, the young
 and rising generation, ought powerfully
 to influence us in this important business.
 Who, that is possessed of the tender feel-
 ings of a parent's heart in behalf of their
 dearly beloved offspring, that would not
 press forward by every possible means to
 save from ruin that State, and forward
 its prosperity, on which their children do
 so much depend, when themselves are
 gone hence, and are no more. If there-
 fore the welfare of ourselves and children
 in time, and the joint happiness of both
 when time is no more, can have their due
 influence,

influence, we will certainly break through every difficulty to secure such important ends; which, when obtained, will evermore be found the surest way to secure a lasting peace and national prosperity.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

AN
 N 2
 This work is intended to be a
 property and native lot — the
 of the ocean — the rest and delight
 of the surrounding nations — the
 of the British colonies — the
 of the world — it gives the most full
 of the world to all true lovers of
 native country to behold the constantly
 increasing population of this once great
 and fertile, but now almost empty
 the vast territories of the world for to
 it is a new world — the constantly in-
 creasing luxury of the rich at home, the ex-
 traordinary price of all sorts of provisions, the
 increasing load of our public debt, and many

HUMBLE ADDRESS

TO THE

Right Honourable the Lords and Gentlemen Proprietors of the Landed Interest of Great Britain ;

Most Noble and Illustrious Lords,

THIS once blifsful ifland,—your joint property and native foil,—the Em-
prefs of the ocean,—the terror and delight
of the furrounding nations,—even fair
Britannia ftretches out her hand to you
for help. It gives the moft fenfible di-
ftrefs of mind to all true lovers of their
native country, to behold the constantly
increafing depopulation of this once great
and mighty, but now declining empire,
through emigrations of the poorer fort to
fettlements abroad, the constantly increaf-
ing luxury of the rich at home, the extra-
vagant price of all forts of provifions, the
amazing load of our public debt, and heavy
taxes

taxes consequent thereon; the mismanagement of, and oppression upon the landed interest. We are sorry to find these melancholy truths too well supported by the testimonies of several able and judicious writers, particularly Dr Price, in his *Present State of Population in England and Wales*. From authentic accounts recited in this essay, the following particulars seem to be proved: That the number of inhabitants in England and Wales cannot at present be so many as five millions: That the number of houses of the best sort had increased, between 1765 and 1777, from 236,018 to 263,831; but that in the same period, the number of cottages and houses, having less than eight windows, had decreased 55,771: That, within this period, the number of our people has been lessened at least 200,000: That this is only a part of a course of depopulation which has been going on since the Revolution; and that this depopulation has been derived chiefly from the following causes,—the increase of our army and navy,—a devouring capital, too large for the body that supports it,—the three long and destructive continental wars in which we have been involved,—the emi-

grations to our settlements abroad, and particularly to the East and West Indies,—the engrossing of farms,—the high price of provisions,—but above all the increase of luxury, and of our public debts and taxes. It is observed, that the depopulation arising from these causes is the more mortifying, because it is in some degree peculiar to this nation; and, in order to illustrate this, an account is given of the number and increase of the inhabitants in some European kingdoms; and particularly in France, where it appears, that the inhabitants cannot be a smaller number than 25 millions, and that the annual births exceed the annual deaths a seventh part. The average of the former, for five years before 1775, having been 928,918, and of the latter 793,931. After stating a great variety of facts, all tending to confirm the rapid progress of depopulation among us, Dr Price concludes his essay in the following words:—“Thus unhappily
 “are we distinguished in this country:
 “Nor will it appear wonderful, when we
 “consider how unhappily we are distinguished
 “by some of the worst causes of
 “depopulation, and with what particular
 “force they have been operating for the
 “last

11 last 20 years. At present we are sink-
 12 ing under new difficulties. The most
 13 valuable of our dependencies are lost.
 14 Another foreign war is begun. Our
 15 strength is wasting; and at the same time
 16 that load of debt, which has pressed so
 17 heavily on our population, is encreasing
 18 faster than ever. Never were the re-
 19 sources of a State so anticipated and
 20 mortgaged. Never before did impru-
 21 dence and extravagance bring a great
 22 kingdom into such peril." These me-
 23 lancholly truths are worthy of your Lord-
 24 ships most serious attention; and, if
 25 thought upon in time, all we have yet
 26 lost may be recovered with exceeding
 27 great advantage. There has no disastrous
 28 events overtaken us yet but the
 29 Oracles of Truth has provided a reme-
 30 dy, whether it refer to the great first
 31 cause, the anger of the Lord, or the second
 32 causes, namely, Our folly and misconduct
 33 consequent thereon. The best remedy of
 34 all these evils we find recorded, Jer. xviii.
 35 7, 8, 9, 10. "At what instant I shall
 36 speak concerning a nation and concern-
 37 ing a kingdom, to pluck up, and to
 38 pull down, and to destroy it; if that
 39 nation against whom I have pronoun-
 40 ced,

“ ced, turn from their evil, I will repent
 “ of the evil I thought to do unto them.
 “ And at what instant I shall speak con-
 “ cerning a nation, and concerning a
 “ kingdom, to build and to plant it; if
 “ it do evil in my sight, that it obey not
 “ my voice, then I will repent of the
 “ good wherewith I said I would benefit
 “ them.”

Again, Isa. i. “ Learn to do well; seek
 “ judgement; relieve the oppressed;
 “ judge the fatherless; plead for the wi-
 “ dow. If you be willing and obedient,
 “ ye shall eat of the good of the land;
 “ but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be
 “ devoured by the sword, for the mouth
 “ of the Lord hath spoken it.” Thus, my
 Lords, that Sovereign Majesty, who is not
 a man that He should lie, nor the son of
 man that He should repent, hath clearly
 pointed out our sin, and the danger conse-
 quent thereon, our duty, and the bles-
 sings that shall assuredly follow. What
 then follows, my Lords, but that you no-
 bly exert your princely powers towards a
 general reform. From among your illus-
 trious number proceeds the great Council
 of the nation; so that no needful power
 is wanting toward this important reform;

two principal branches of which are the extermination of oppression from the landed interest, &c. and a far more vigorous exertion of the civil power for suppressing vice and immorality, and for encouraging religion and virtue. Among the Jews, we find no sin so grievously complained of as their oppressions, and no sin against which more grievous judgements are denounced. We heartily wish we could say, that this sin is not as rampant amongst us now as among the Jews of old. O that it were not too easily to be seen in its direful consequences in this oppressed State. Thousands in their excessive opulence and abundance wallowing in all manner of excesses and abominations, while three times as many thousands, as the final reward of all their services, as beasts of burden to the rest, through dire oppression, poverty and want, are sinking into the lowest abyss of earthly misery, who would be glad of the crumbs that fall from the teeth of their masters dogs. Every succeeding war dragging forth their uneducated, unprincipled sons, like dogs, into the school of vice, the army and navy. Every succeeding peace, sending home their seamen and troops without callings,

callings, and without pension, to fill the country with troops of beggars and robbers, where, after having robbed and murdered troops of innocent subjects, the next quarter sessions sends them in troops to the gallows.

The army and navy having disgorged their part, to furnish the tragical scenes, up comes next a troop of hard-fated sons from the landed interest, from their ruined farms, short leases, and oppressive heights ; and seldom having it in their power to sell the necessaries of life upon such terms as the poor tradesmen and labourers were able to buy, and all means spent and patience tired out, a fatal necessity takes place, that hundreds having turned out to beg, the rest, having passed through the accustomed forms, proceed forward in procession to uphold the general carnage on the ignominious trees.

All we have yet related, my Lords, is not the ten thousand part of the fatal consequences of oppression ; for when people, through oppression, find themselves not able to live by ordinary industry, they must now devote their whole souls and time to the pursuit of a worldly interest. Hence they are led to forget God, to forget

get Christ and eternal ages; they who were once taught, that the few uncertain days or years of their abode here constitutes their probationary state, and according as it is spent, so must it fare with them for ever; they who were taught to worship God, to read his word, to meditate therein day and night, to talk of his word to their children and domestics,—as they sit in their houses, or walk by the way, or rising up, or lying down, are, by oppression, so deeply immersed in the pursuit of a worldly interest, that they too often betray their souls, and the souls of their children, to their eternal ruin. May the Lord of Heaven and Earth dispose your Lordships to look out in time, and to bring in a sovereign remedy for this God provoking sin. There are thousands of your princely names, that, with deepest abhorrence, would reject the unrighteous gains of oppression, that are possessed of every noble and benevolent virtue that can adorn the human soul; but there are others, whose measures produce many of those dismal effects we do so ardently deplore, concerning whom we would say, a few uncertain days or years will soon end the trifling distinction which

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at present subsists between the rich and poor, when we shall stand with them upon even ground. If we were once arrived at the house appointed for all living, there the wicked shall cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners of death rest together. They hear not the cry of the oppressor. And now, my Lords, since the cause of sacred truth and justice requires no less at our hands, let us duly advert to this well known truth, when speaking concerning the grievous oppressions that prevail upon the landed interest, that nine-tenths of their oppressions flow from themselves. What numbers have I not witnessed, rushing into the presence of their noble masters with most unaccountable, and heedless impetuosity, in quest of their neighbours possessions; and when the strictest orders was given, that none should make such offers as would not leave them decent bread for themselves, yet nothing could avail, till both parties were involved in one general ruin. Thus they fabricate their own miseries, from which your Lordships alone can deliver them. But what shall be done to save them from each other, as well as from oppressive masters?

sters? Verily, my Lords, with all possible submission to your superior and princely wisdoms, I can see their deliverance in nothing short of a perpetuity. And even although we should grant their masters to be wholly ignorant in their sufferings, yet not innocent too in refusing a remedy; and until that take place, some masters will take the advantage of their folly and indiscretion, and put the cap-stone upon those miseries they have so largely laid in for themselves. Concerning which masters I would only say, 1. My Lords, What can these poor great ones mean? Or what has befallen them? who would be esteemed learned, wise, reasonable, and just, yet has not learned how unwise, unreasonable, and unjust they are to their own souls; that, for the sake of a few uncertain days or years spent in the wretched pursuit of ten thousand times more than enough, that, for this, they should risk an eternity of heavenly joys, by spreading desolation and misery far and wide around them while they remain in time. The most exquisite learning is but blundering ignorance, the most consummate and finished wisdom is but folly and madness, which has not taught their students these two great

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truths,

truths, namely, That the wide extended universe, with all the pleasures, riches, and honours with which it abounds, put into the possession of one man, is utterly insufficient to satisfy the cravings of one single soul endowed with immortality; and that the favour of the supreme Majesty, in and through the great Redeemer, his Son, is the only sure and solid foundation of all happiness in this world, and of endless felicity in that which is to come. How then, my Lords, can those great ones, who look for a perpetuity of bliss hereafter, refuse their poor tenants a perpetuity of the comforts of this life? And, How can those who look for deliverance from a perpetuity of misery hereafter, refuse their poor tenants deliverance from a perpetuity of oppression and misery here. My Lords, the great Son of God, for your sake, suffered 33 years banishment from his great Father's arms; and, though the heir of all things, yet, for your sakes, made himself so poor, that he had no where to lay his blessed head. What less can your Lordships do for Christ, what less, at the desire of those blessed lips which spake as never man spake, then to break the bands of oppression, and let

go his poor captives, at least, for high price and reward; and, in gratitude to your Almighty Deliverer, grant them perpetual deliverance from all their oppressions here, and the powers of delivering under your Lordships, by hard labour and industry, this oppressed State from the almost infinite load of calamities, under which she groans. My Lords, If the Lord of angels, in his first entry upon the work of your redemption, was willing for your sakes to put up with the mean accommodations of a stable and manger for his cradle, Will not your Lordships, for his sake, in your noble palaces, and princely towers, rest satisfied with your present easy affluence and abundance, until the time arrive, when, with heaven's highest approbation, you can have a great deal more? If those blessed feet, which went about doing good, did, for your sakes, sojourn in this lower world 33 years, till the great business of your redemption was accomplished, the prey of oppression then being given up by you the mighty, and the lawful captives delivered, what less time can be given them as substitutes under your Lordships, to accomplish the redemption of the State from that enormous

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load

load of debt under which she lies. And O remember, my Lords, the divine Redeemer had no substitute in his Work, as your Lordships can have in yours. He trode, for your sakes, the wine-press of his Father's wrath alone; and, of the people, there was none with him. And if he, the blood-royal of heaven, did sweat great drops of blood for you, O do not say deeply stain the blood of Nobles, as to lift up the heel against him. O my Lords, it is but too common in the day of health and prosperity, and fullness of all things, to over-rate these inferior comforts, and to under-rate the Divine Redeemer and his great salvation, and are abundantly close handed to every noble and generous purpose tending to promote the honour of God, and the universal happiness of their fellow brethren, although these are the primary ends for which the divine Providence hath bestowed such ample fortunes, namely, That they may honour God with their great fortunes, and be universal blessings to all around them. But, my Lords, although these great duties may be forgotten amidst the hurry and bustle of the trivial affairs of time, and all tender feelings for the com-

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mon miseries that are attendant on the needy and dependent state of man, may be for a time forgotten, yet, when the lease of life is at the final close, and all eternity disclosed to view; when the awful sentence is pronounced, "Thou fool, "this night thy soul shall be required of thee;" then, Whose shall these things be which thou hast prepared? Who would not lay their fortunes, sceptres, crowns and kingdoms at the feet of this Almighty Redeemer, under the terrors of this last dreadful hour! What then, my Lords, we would do for him in the hour of sickness and death, is our highest wisdom to do for him in the day of prosperity and health.

My Lords, it is a most true observation of the great Redeemer of mankind, That never one applied to him in vain,—never one came upon a good errand and went away with a sore heart. Will your Lordships reply, That no earthly power is able to come up to such an example? Yes, my Lords, The Delight of Mankind, the illustrious Titus, although an heathen prince, wrote divinely fair after this divine example, whose constant maxim was, That no man ought to go away sorrowful from the

the presence of a prince; and therefore it is said, he never sent any away with an unpleasing answer. And so strong a propensity had he to do good, that one night being put in remembrance by those about him, that he had done nothing for any person that day, with a sorrowful countenance, he replied, "Alas! my friends we have lost a day!"—a sentence worthy of an emperor for its author, and fit to be retained in the memories of all princes and great men.

My Lords, it never was in the power of Titus to do such imminent service in behalf of the Roman empire, in his days, as it is in your Lordships power, in behalf of the British empire, in your days. All that Titus could do was to make the people happy in his time, and to set a fair example to his successors in power; but your Lordships are able, not only to make the people happy in your own time, but also, at one potent stroke, for ever to put it beyond the power of your latest posterity to nullify the Godlike example once set before them. In your Lordships power it is to put forth such an unparalleled example of your princely benignity, goodness and moderation, as might almost tempt

tempt the revolted colonies to with-
 selves back to their former allegiance; and
 make fair Britannia once more great among
 the nations, and prince among the provin-
 ces; and, in your Lordships power also it
 is, by permitting a contemptuous treading
 down of the laws of our Almighty Ally,
 and handing down the powers of oppres-
 sion to posterity, to crush your fair Bri-
 tannia down to a low contemptible colony
 of France.

Permit me then, my Lords and Gentle-
 men, to implore you, by all the most
 sacred ties that can possibly influence hu-
 manity, to listen, not barely to our hum-
 ble supplication, but to the divine call,
 Isa. i. "Relieve the oppressed." And,
 first, for the sake of that Majesty Divine
 who hath so eminently distinguished your
 Lordships above the common level of man-
 kind, and who looks for, and expects
 great things at your Lordships hands; for
 his sake, in behalf of the more indigent
 part of the human species; for to whom
 much is given, much sorely will be re-
 quired,—our gracious Creator delights in
 making his creatures happy, and in award-
 ing their miseries. Then is your Lord-
 ships actions truly great and noble, when
 constantly

constantly studious to follow the divine example. To this divine and distinguishing goodness alone are your Lordships indebted, that you were not born a part of the meanest and most indigent of the human kind.

Secondly, For his sake also, my Lords, who chose to be indigent; who chose to be contemned, and became poor, that you might be rich, — that you might be entitled to the treasures, and numbered with the princes of heaven, even with princes that excell in strength, and are clothed with transcendent brightness and majesty. And when your Lordships are become men of hoary locks, bending beneath a weight of years, and tottering on the brink of the grave, then let the winds blow, the tempestuous ocean rage, the thunders roar, the lightnings flash, and universal nature be shaken to her remotest centre, he will be your support under all your infirmities, and the rock of your salvation to eternal ages. Did he suffer an arrest upon his great and sacred person, and laid down that life for your Lordships sakes, and for us all, even while we were his enemies, and in proud rebellious arms? Does not your Lordships stand the prison-
ers

ers of amazement? Could even the sun behold the awful sight? No. The shocking scene drove back his chariot wheels; midnight veil'd his face. A midnight nature shudder'd to behold; a midnight, new from her Creator, frown. Did the sun, my Lords, fly his Maker's pain, and start at that enormous load of human guilt which bow'd his glorious head; and will not your Lordships, for his sake, let some small considerations go in behalf of friends, when you hear such an illustrious suitor ask the same, saying, Relieve the oppressed. This divine Person was, and would have been infinitely happy, had we never been, or had we been miserable for ever; but your Lordships are not so independent of those persons in whose behalf he makes request; yet in this he asks no further testimony of your Lordships love for all he has done, but to seek judgement to relieve the oppressed, to judge the fatherless, and to plead for the widow.

Thirdly, We look for your Lordships compliance for our Sovereign's sake. If your Lordship should permit the spirit of oppression to rage a little longer, and suffer such universal degeneracy of manners to

to reign among the people, without a more vigorous exertion of the civil power for suppression of the same, you will shake the British throne,—will tear it from its stable foundation, and cast down a race of most illustrious Princes, from the highest elevation of earthly glory, to the lowest abyss of earthly misery, 1 Sam. xiii. 28.

Fourthly, We might expect your Lordships compliance for your country's and inheritance sakes. As yet your Lordship's sit as sovereign princes, adorned with splendor, armed with princely power, almost omnipotent, able to bring into effect every great and noble purpose you are pleased to form. How would it degrade you from your princely dignities, basely to become the tributary Lords to any foreign power? Lords, said I,—in vain should your Lordships trust the courtesy of enemies to retain those illustrious titles, to retain your birthrights and antient inheritances. If the Lord God omnipotent should send them in terrible indignation to cut us off for our wickedness, whoever our enemies, are we should find them, as the scriptures speak, a bitter and hasty nation, who may glory in pulling the kingdom to pieces, and in pulling the mighty

mighty natives from their seats, and in exalting them of low degree.

Fifthly, We might expect your Lordships compliance for our Religion's sake. If our God should, in terrible indignation for our oppressions, and innumerable other transgressions, which pass unregarded by the civil power, (though subject to its controul,) should give us a conquest into the hand of our enemies, with all the other invaluable blessings of a free people, our religion goes also. We banish Christ, and enthrone Antichrist; and with our banished Redeemer, and our Protestant reformed Religion, we banish, in effect, every other national blessing. The glory then shall depart from this our Israel. No longer shall Britain remain the mistress of the deep. No more homage paid to the British flag. No longer shall British thunder terrify the surrounding nations. Never more shall be recovered the sullied lustre of Britannia's arms; and when irrecoverably sunk into this disgraceful state of humiliation, other nations shall ask, Wherefore hath the Lord done so to this great people? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Deut. xxix. 25. "Then men shall say, because they have
" forsaken

“ forsaken the covenant of the Lord
 “ their God, and have sinned against
 “ Him. And the anger of the Lord was
 “ kindled against this land, to bring up-
 “ on it all the curses that are written in
 “ this Book; and the Lord rooted them
 “ out in great anger, and in wrath, and
 “ in great indignation, as it is this day.”

Before concluding, three observations
 occur, not altogether unworthy your Lord-
 ships notice. The first is, That it is be-
 yond the power of human wisdom to
 bring any part of these (nearly) ten mil-
 lions into existence upon any other plan
 than under the encouragement referred to
 in this publication, and without which all
 these millions yearly must be lost, both to
 the State and to your Lordships. 2dly,
 Were the encouragement granted, and this
 wealth brought into existence, I hope we
 have sufficiently proved, that it is impos-
 sible to do justice to the State, if her deli-
 verance from that oppressive load does not
 arise from the first end of those supplies.
 Lastly, As there is no other internal
 strength in this country fit to effect this
 great business, neither funds to preserve
 peace nor to support war, without the
 people being relieved not only from the
 oppressions

oppressions complained of, but also put in possession of the opposite blessings; both of which, if denied, we may read our fate as a State, or kingdom, in Isaiah, chap. i. upon the same subject. "Re-
 " lieve the oppressed; judge the father-
 " less; plead for the widow: But if ye
 " refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured
 " by the sword; for the Mouth of the
 " Lord hath spoken it."

*A Letter from the Author to a Person of
 Distinction, high in Office in this Kingdom,
 upon his intended Publication; the result
 of which encouraged him to Print the
 Work, and bring it forth to public view.*

My Lord,

WITH the highest degree of that re-
 verence due to your Lordship's
 exalted station and dignity, permit me to
 take notice, that the inclosed Proposals is
 the general heads of a small book I am
 just now going to publish. Be pleased, my
 Lord, to honour them with a glance.—
 Let not the seeming impracticability of so
 great an undertaking dispose your Lord-
 ship to throw it aside without examina-
 tion, nor to with-hold the honour of
 P your

your countenance and favour, as your Lordship is entirely sensible, that the supreme disposer of the fates of kingdoms doth not always work by the ministration of great abilities; on the contrary, he has, and often takes pleasure in bringing forward the high purposes of his Providence by mean and contemptible instruments. It is evident then to your Lordship, that this oppressed State labours under all those evils implied in the general heads of this small Essay. It is equally evident, she stands in need of all those positive reliefs and advantages held forth in the same. Shall I beg your Lordships attention, while I make a few observations on some of the most principal. And first, As the crushing weight of the enormous sum of two hundred and eighty millions must be attended with many grievous consequences in this oppressed State, particularly, in the more impoverished parts of the kingdom, would it not be a most desirable blessing, if funds could be pointed out capable of reducing eight millions yearly of principal; and these new funds in their nature, so far from having any oppressive effects upon the people, that, on the contrary, they shall confessedly acknowledge their

their begun prosperity from their first entry upon this arduous task.

Secondly, What disagreeable consequences are not attendant upon that unnatural, unconstitutional practice of impressing men upon the commencement of a war, a grievous innovation upon the principles of our constitution, and upon the natural rights and liberties of mankind. What grief and sorrow, anger and rage, fills every corner of the kingdom before our fleets are mann'd, &c. What horrid oaths and blasphemous imprecations are not poured out against the authors and causes by our more fiery and masculine spirits, insomuch, that we may say concerning our miseries, and our children on that account, as the Roman Emperor Augustus said concerning the vices of some of his children, Would to heaven, says the Emperor, that I had lived without a wife, or died without children. The defence of this practice, my Lord, is common, namely, The necessities of the State; but would it not be most desirable, if the necessities of the State could be supplied in a far more amicable manner; if we should point out a way to furnish the State with

200,000 men, without offering violence to the inclinations of one single man.

Thirdly, What disagreeable consequences attend the conclusion of a war, when the army and navy is disbanded. The bravest seamen and troops in the world must run away (in want of bread) some to the service of foreign Princes and States; some may be seen begging their bread in the streets of those very realms their valour saved from ruin; some betake themselves to the high ways for robbery, so that we can scarce go a few miles from our own doors, but we are in danger of being knock'd in the head, and cannot promise to return either with life or property. Would it not be most agreeable to the tender feelings of every person possessed with humanity, were it but to prevent the numberless executions that daily take place in consequence of this woeful neglect of the army, &c. if we shall point out a way to raise one million eight hundred thousand pounds to pension the said forces in time of peace, at L. 9 Sterling yearly *per* man.

Forthly, As the trifling force we content ourselves with in time of peace, renders us so contemptible in the eyes of our enemies,

enemies, as to dispose them to break with us upon the slightest occasions, would not such a gallant army, well disciplined, under pension, be a special means under God of keeping our enemies in some awe, and of rendering Britain more respectable in the eyes of the surrounding nations.

Fifthly, As every succeeding war is attended with these two distressing effects upon the State; not only to interrupt the payment of past arrears, but also obliging us to contract more, and still add to the enormous load, what singular advantage would it not be to the State, to construct and settle these new funds, as the eight millions levied yearly for the reduction of the debt, with the eighteen hundred thousand pounds for pensioning the army, would make us strong, under God, to give our enemies warm play during a war.

Sixthly, Upon this article I shall only here take notice, that there are two kinds of oppression prevailing on the landed interest; namely, short leases, and engrossing farms. The one discouraging industry, and all good improvement; the other exterminating the little tenants out of the land, which impolitic measures, like a wide

spreading pestilence, carries its desolating consequences through all the lower ranks of the people, to the inmost recesses of the kingdom, and is the fatal source of all the emigrations and oppressions of every other kind under which the lower ranks groan, and the fruitful womb of almost every species of crime and wickedness committed in the land. If the proposed remedy took place, it would not only prevent all emigrations and much oppression in future, but also make the fortunes of the nobility and gentry of the nation one third greater than they are at present.

Seventhly, Upon the 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 articles, we may with safety pronounce concerning them, that such is their necessary connection with, and dependence upon the three foregoing articles, that, until the desire of them is in some measure granted, never shall the people be freed from oppression, nor recover their wonted prosperity and opulence. Never shall emigrations cease, nor that rapid progress of depopulation among the people of Great Britain, which has been going on ever since the Revolution, nor the true remedy be found against a spirit of rebellion, which is often seeded by a
general

general discontent in the minds of the people. Never shall a steady course of moderation take place amongst the necessities of life, nor honesty and industry meet with suitable encouragement, nor any intermission of those innumerable robberies with which our country is distressed, nor our land improved to purpose in fertility and beauty, nor its people in population,—until proper measures are adopted on the landed interest, and proper provision made for the army in time of peace. For the particulars of which, I refer your Lordship to the publication at large on these heads.

Article 15. A more effectual remedy for the suppression of vice and immorality, and for the encouragement of religion and virtue; or, the surest way to secure a lasting peace and national prosperity. On this head, my Lord, we shall only make this short observation, that as there is a necessary connection betwixt the favour of the supreme Majesty, and the prosperity of a nation, we may with safety venture to affirm, that it exceeds the wisdom of men or angels to draw up a system of politics that shall secure either peace or prosperity to the British nation, or even
prevent

prevent her final overthrow, if their first work is not to stem that torrent of vice and immorality which hath broken in upon this nation; which, like an overflowing flood, hath over-run the whole island, and threatens to bury her in her own ruins. In such circumstances, who can settle the balance of power, or dispose the Princes of Europe to divide themselves into even scale against the purpose of an omnipotent Majesty? Vanity of vanities. If the universal Sovereign should, in terrible indignation for our wickedness, throw himself into the adverse scale, where are we then with the balance of power? Should he become our enemy, and fight against us, Who could set bounds to his fiery indignation, or say unto Him, Thus far shalt thou proceed but no further; and here shall the proud waves, and fatal depredations of Almighty vengeance be staid; therefore, we may assuredly conclude, that none can sit down at the helm of this our endangered State, and steer her through the stormy and tempestuous sea of life, stirred into tempest by divine indignation for sin, nor keep her from dashing to pieces against the rocks of war, famine, pestilence, nor ever conduct

duct her into the desired haven of prosperity or safety, by any system of measures drawn from ought but the oracles of truth.

The fate, my Lord, of all nations, and in all ages, constrains me to embrace these sentiments. I ever more found that an universal degeneracy of manners amongst a people does always precede the ruin of a State, which is undoubtedly our situation at this day. The walls of Babylon, my Lord, were as competent for her safety as the British fleet, or the incircling ocean, is for ours; yet when their cup of iniquity was full, and the divine long-suffering could no longer endure, what follows? Why, their almost impregnable, their hundred gated capital, could no longer save them from his anointed Cyrus. Was this a single instance, my Lord, without a second example. Shall not the overgrown power of Persia come down as mightily, when under the frown of the universal Sovereign? Yes. But where shall that hero be found, whose long experience in the arts of war, and military discipline, shall qualify him for this great enterprise? Here is no need of such a long spun out and tedious apparatus,

paratus, where Jehovah's sword is lent in aid? No. The Macedonian youth, but Philip's warlike son, must now arise into the great Alexander, and, with an handful of Macedonians, disdaining the aid of his Greek auxiliaries, sweeps Darius and his army with the besom of destruction. Where is now this great lawgiver?—Yesterday the terror of the whole earth, to-day a captive to the Macedonian youth. Where now the lustre of the Persian arms, graced so lately with valour invincible, shining in gold and silver, dazzling the eyes of their very conquerors, covering the earth with their innumerable numbers, bearing all down before them with unconquerable bravery. But now the high, the Almighty commission is gone forth. Thus far shall they proceed, but no farther; and here shall the proud waves, and fatal depredations of the Persian arms be staid. They must now give way to the superior obstinacy of Macedonian valour, and the fields being soaked with rivers of Persian blood, shall next have their carcases to improve the soil. But if the once unconquerable Darius found a conqueror at last, surely this conqueror shall find none. That monarchy,

of

of which he is the head, may say, as once did Babylon, I shall be a Lady forever, and shall never see adversity.

But who art thou, O power less than divine, that, confiding in the greatness of thine own strength, amidst thine own wickedness, dar'st look for such permanency of felicity here. In building up a durable felicity, they build too low that build beneath the stars. Thy invincible conqueror, though now pushing eastward, westward, northward, and southward; so that none is able to stand before him. The great horn of his power shall soon be broken also. That princely hand, which now so fiercely waves the shining sword, the rapid progress of whose invincible arms outruns all intelligence, shall next, when his strength forsakes him, prove the unguarded hand to hold the poisoned cup to his intemperate lips, and, by one fatal draught, put an end to all his glory, pomp, and magnificence in one day. Again, be states and kingdoms brought very low, yea, upon a dutiful return to their benignant Creator, they are lifted up from the depths of misery to high degrees of earthly prosperity.

To

To mention but a single instance, among innumerable, this may suffice:— Israel in the days of Gideon, Was not his three hundred men as all the thousands of Israel? Their victory that day depended not on numbers great or small, but “the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.” But how endless were the list of the rise and fall of states and kingdoms? From which observations we may fairly deduce the following truths: First, That there is no state or condition so debilitated or broken, into which a kingdom may fall, but, by a due return to their offended Creator, they may on this ground recover all with great advantage. Secondly, That there is no height of power or greatness to which a kingdom can arrive, but, by giving way to a deluge of prophane-ness, vice, and immorality, and an universal degeneracy of manners suffered to reign without controul; but it shall assuredly usher in their final destruction. Would we avoid then, My Lord, the rock upon which so many great nations have split, could we wish to find a salve for every sore under which this oppressed state does labour, let us seek it only in that way prescribed by the oracles of truth.

It

It is this blessed Book alone, my Lord,
 that is competent to inform us duly of
 the important terms of peace, and recon-
 ciliation with our justly incensed Creator,
 whose high displeasure does signally ap-
 pear in various dispensations of Provi-
 dence, particularly in dangerous seasons,
 an awakening sword, and epidemical
 distempers in several parts of the land,
 and whose anger may be still more
 thoroughly understood from our hitherto
 impious and dissolute courses. Meantime,
 I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,
 and very humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Q

A N

A N
ADDRESS TO THE POOR,
O R

Those who suffer most grievously from
the present oppressive spirit of the times,
whether in City or Country ;

My Friends,

IF it should please God, in his providence, to withhold the inestimable blessings of deliverance from those evils we do so ardently deplore, and the possession of those blessings we do so ardently implore, let us endeavour submissively to bear that yoke, from which it appears, we are not yet ripe for deliverance. Let us labour the more attentively in the pursuit of those blessings, which, if diligently sought after, and once secured, will not fail nor misgive us. While some are wading to wealth and fortune by oppression, and to fame and empire through seas

seas of blood, let us endeavour with equal ardour to press forward through the Red Sea of the Redeemer's blood to that kingdom which shall not be moved. But what have those in view by such unmeasurable pursuits, after those treasures which cannot profit in the awful period of greatest extremity. The three great idols that doth so much engross the hearts of mankind are pleasures, riches and honours; and, to get their fill of these, they enlarge their desires without measure; and perhaps they soon arrive at the utmost height of their first wishes; but when these are obtained, finding they embrace but a phantom, they renew their pursuit, and push their conquests like Alexander, who having with ease come into the possession of Macedonia, his father's kingdom, but finding its scanty limits too narrow for his capacious desires, and, at the same time, seeing others above him, resolves on a war with Darius King of Persia (the great lawgiver then of the whole earth;) but altho' Persia was overthrown, and its ample territories all his own, yet, his thirst of empire still encreased; for he next turned his victorious arms to India, &c. of which he also made a conquest.

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But

But its extensive territories, with many other extensive countries bounded by the ocean, had not the desired effect of satisfying his unbounded ambition, so that he became more unhappy than at his first setting out. He even wept for want of room to his ravaging sword; and his raging thirst of empire still encreasing, Providence, in mercy to mankind, permits a cup of poison to put an end at once to his unmeasurable ambition, and to all his glory, pomp, and magnificence, in one day. O my Friends, the meanest conqueror in the kingdom, of the Prince of the kings of the earth, is far greater than Alexander, or Julius Cæsar, or any earthly conqueror. You know the Scripture says, that the righteous shall rest from all their labours, and their good works shall follow them; yea, shall follow them to their honour, their everlasting honour, and shall be their crown of rejoicing in the great day of the Lord. But I am afraid many of the heroes, the tyrannical, and unlawful conquerors of this world, will make a poor figure in the great day of the Lord, provided their works follow them to the next world. What a dreadful tribe of mangled soldiers, destitute widows

dows crying, and fatherless children must appear against them. One would think that it would be punishment sufficient for the unlawful invading Princes, and conquerors of this world, to hear the men they have caused to be slain, the orphans they have deprived of their fathers, the widows they have deprived of their husbands, reciting their acts of valour, through eternity, in the other world. The spirit of God speaking in the Psalms, says, " Scatter those of the people that delight " in war." What would those ambitious Princes, the natural and apparently sworn enemies of Great Britain, that delight so much in war, that never let us have half an age of rest, answer for their conduct? What degree of all their conquests would they not lay down at the feet of the Prince of the kings of the earth, to be a good friend to them in that great day; yet, it is their own fault, if such friendship they want either now or then. Were they wise in time, to act in conformity to the true ends of all good government, to wit, The public welfare; but if, in contempt of these, and to gratify their lawless ambition, they shall levy cruel wars, wasting the earth, and destroy-

ing their fellow creatures, what wonder if he scatter them at last with all their power, to their final destruction. They shall not then have so much influence as to be able to sanctify the murder of their own subjects and ours too, by a form of law, and pretence of religion, which will be bound to no faith with heretics. But when the Prince of the kings of the earth makes his glorious appearance in judgement, and call those to account for all their wicked deeds, shall behold Him as their Judge, and stand their trial like other sinful mortals, What a poor abject figure will these arbitrary Monarchs and tyrants make, who have persecuted and oppressed mankind, to gratify their vile lusts and appetites, when they must stand before the dread Tribunal of the Man of God's right hand? Such enemies to mercy and justice as they, among all the tribes of men, shall wail most because of Him. But why? Because their own consciences will inform them what they deserve, and anticipate the sentence of the righteous judge. What an awful sight this, to see those who have plundered empires, sacked cities, slaughtered millions, made widows and orphans, that wail and
lament

lament for the death of their husbands and fathers,—to see the crowned heads wringing their hands, gnashing their teeth, and cursing their fate, all waiting for the final sentence. What a sad reverse. Men who, with their nod, made nations tremble,—all shivering, quaking, and trembling before the face of the Lamb.

But might not these mighty tyrants assemble their guards to attempt a rescue, and cover their retreat from Eternal Justice. Vanity of vanities; their whole power then is summed up in one impotent wish,—a wish, the accomplishment of which would now fill them with terror. But what is it? Why, that some prodigious mountain or rock would fall upon them, and hide them from the face of that tremendous Majesty that sits upon the Throne; as the great day of his wrath is come, and none of his enemies are able to stand before him. The Prince of the Kings of the earth will be found the best defence of his people, against all wicked and arbitrary powers. How highly then does it behove the Princes of this world to examine, in all their deliberations and purposes of war, upon what side this Almighty Prince is likely to declare himself?

It

It is easily discovered, he is always sure to declare himself upon that side where mercy and truth is. The Kings of the earth, with all their subjects, are only so many distinct incorporate bodies in the great society of mankind, under the dominion and controul of the Prince of the Kings of the earth. To think he has given laws of nature and religion to direct them in the practice of justice and truth, by which they are taught how to behave toward each other. No worldly power whatsoever can ever have any power to do injustice; if they do, this holy and righteous King will call them to a strict account for their behaviour. When ruling powers make reasons of state superior to rules of justice and truth, and pursue measures of government inimical to self evident and fundamental laws, they are then enemies to the Prince of the Kings of the earth, and will, in the conclusion, feel his power with a vengeance. Christian magistrates ought not to proceed one step, without a palpable scripture authority, for fear of offending the Prince of the Kings of the earth in making war or peace. The Supreme ought to be consulted. Matters never

never go on with good success when men do not set the Lord before them.

From this picture of discontent, so easy to be read in the lot of princes, let us learn the unsatisfying nature of all earthly enjoyments. Happiness is the pursuit of all men, but few provide the chart of knowledge pointing where it lies. The proud man seeks it in honour,—the covetous man in wealth,—the epicure and glutton in delicate eating and a full belly,—the drunkard seeks it in his bottle,—the young man, void of understanding, seeks it among harlots,—the ambitious, in large possessions, and extensive territories; and all mad with disappointments, find themselves worse at the end of their career than at their first setting out. While they are hot in pursuit of their vain, unsatisfying pleasures, let us labour to secure those pleasures that are at God's right-hand for evermore.

While these are labouring by any means to possess themselves of those riches that will not profit in the day of wrath, learn we from them, with equal ardour, to secure to ourselves the true riches, namely, The unsearchable riches of Christ. While these are labouring incessantly after fame, honour,

honour, and renown here, seek we that honour which cometh from God. Let us seek our true honour in honouring God. Them that honour me, (says he,) I will honour; and they that despise me, shall one day be lightly esteemed themselves. While they are incessantly in pursuit of a happiness that will leave them, when they have most need, labour we to secure to ourselves a happiness which shall only be beginning when theirs is at an end. While these have their whole attention engrossed in pursuit of those enjoyments with which they must forever part, in 20, 30, or 40 years, let us labour to secure an interest in those joys which will only be made perfect when time is no more, and unmeasurable eternity be the date of their duration. But why did we flatter the worldling with 20, 30, or 40 years, to enjoy his foulsome fill of his vile and perishing husks? Who can promise him, or themselves, so many moments? Do we not see men in perfect health in the streets, as it were this moment, the next moment they fall down suddenly in a fit of apoplexy; others seized with violent and raging fevers, or tormenting and excruciating pains, and diseases which

baffle.

baffle all the powers of medicine, and suddenly dislodge their reluctant souls; some sinking to the floor from their easy chair, and deaf even to the most piercing shrieks of their distracted relations; some giving up the ghost, as they are reclined all alone, under the shady arbour to taste the sweets of the flowery scene; some, as they sail associated with a party of pleasure, along the silver stream, while wine and music flow around; some intercepted as they are returning home, and some interrupted as they enter upon an important negotiation; some arrested with the gain of injustice in their hand, and some surprised in the immediate act of lewdness or cruelty.

Legions, legions of disasters, such as no prudence can foresee, nor no care prevent, ly in wait to accomplish our doom. A starting horse may throw his rider, and at once dash his body against the stones, and fling his soul into the invisible world; a stack of chimneys may tumble into the street, and crush the unwary passenger under its ruins; or even a tile dropping from the roof may be as fatal as the fall of the whole structure. If we, or they, my dear friends, are thus suddenly arrest-
ed,

ed, and let slip the sweet, the mediatorial hour, where are we? O what pale reviews, what startling prospects must conspire to augment the sorrows of that tremendous hour? Look they backward, still impenitent, and behold a most melancholy scene—sins unrepented of, mercy slighted, and the day of grace ending. Look they forward, nothing presents itself but the righteous Judge, the dread tribunal, and a most solemn reckoning. Roll they around their affrighted eyes, here are attending friends, and, if accomplices in debauchery, it sharpens their anguish that they have not sinned alone, but drawn others into the snare. At last, perhaps, they begin to pray. Finding no other possible way of relief, they are constrained to apply unto the Almighty with trembling lips and a faltering tongue; they cry unto that sovereign Being who kills and makes alive. But why, O why have they deferred their addresses to Heaven so long? Why have they despised all his councils, and stood incorrigible under his incessant reproofs? How often have they been forwarned of those terrors, and most importunately entreated to turn to the Lord? I wish, my dear friends, they

they may find favour at this last hour, and, by a miracle of grace, be snatched from the very brink, the breaking brink, of eternal misery. But alas! who can tell, Whether affronted Majesty will lend an ear? He may, for aught any mortal knows, "Laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh." Thus they lie groaning out the poor remains of life, their limbs bathed in sweat, their heart struggling with convulsive throws; pains insupportable, throbbing through every pulse, and innumerable darts of agony transfixing their conscience.

In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Raves round the Walls of her Clay Tenement;
Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
But shrieks in vain. How wishfully she looks
On all she's leaving, now no longer hers,
A little longer, yet a little longer,
O! might she stay to wash away her crimes,
And fit her for her passage. Mournful sight.
Her very eyes weep blood, and every groan
She heaves is big with horror. But the Foe,
Like a staunch murderer, steady to his purpose,
Pursues her close through every lane of life,
Nor misses once the track, but presses on,
Till, forc'd at last to the tremendous Verge,
At once she links.

DR BLAIR.

If this be the end of the ungodly, my
Friends, come not thou into their secret;

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unto

unto their assemblies be not thou united. O how awfully accomplished is that prediction of inspired wisdom. Sin, though seemingly sweet in the commission, in the issue biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Happy dissolution, were this the period of their woes; but, alas! all these tribulations are only the beginnings of sorrow. No sooner has the last pang dislodged the reluctant soul, but they are hurried into the presence of an injured and angry God, not under the conducting care of beneficent angels, but exposed to the insults of accursed spirits, who lately tempted them, now upbraid them, and will for ever torment them. Who can conceive their confusion and distress when they stand guilty and inexcusable before their incensed Creator. They are received with frowns. The God that made them has no mercy on them. The Prince of Peace, the Fountain of Felicity, rejects them with abhorrence. He consigns them over to chains of darkness, and receptacles of despair against the severer doom, and more public infamy of the Great Day. Then all the vials of wrath will be emptied upon these wretched creatures. The Law they have
violated

violated, and the Gospel they have slighted; the power they have defied, and the goodness they have abused, will all get themselves honour in their exemplary punishment. Then God, the God to whom vengeance belongeth, will draw the arrow to the very head, and set them as the mark of his inexorable displeasure. Resurrection will be no privilege to them, but immortality itself their everlasting curse. They must awake, must arise, must appear at the bar, and meet the Judge; a Judge, before whom the pillars of heaven tremble, and the earth melts away; a Judge, once long suffering, and very compassionate, but now unalterably determined to teach stubborn offenders what it is to provoke the omnipotent Godhead; what it is to trample upon the blood of his Son, and offer despite to all the gracious overtures of his Spirit. O the perplexity, the distraction, that must confound the impenitent rebels, when they are summoned to the great Tribunal. Misery of miseries, too shocking for reflection to dwell upon; but if so dismal to foresee, and that at a distance, together with some comfortable expectation of escaping, O how better, how inconceivably

ably bitter, to bear, without any intermission, or any mitigation, through hopeless and eternal ages.

Who has any bowels of pity? Who has any sentiments of compassion? Who has any tender concern for his fellow creatures? Who, in God's name, and for Christ's sake, let him shew it, by warning every man, to seek the Lord while he may be found, to throw down the arms of rebellion before the act of indemnity expires, submissively to adore the Lamb, while he holds out the golden sceptre. — Here, let us act the friendly part to mankind. — Here let the whole force of our benevolence exert itself, in exhorting whomsoever we are likely to influence, to take the wings of faith unfeigned, of repentance undelayed, and flee away from this wrath to come.

O my friends, who would for the uncertain enjoyments of precarious time run the dreadful risk, although crowns and kingdoms were their sure conquest? Who would, by delay, put so great a salvation upon a cast of dice, that might yet make it sure beyond all peradventure, by making it the main bent, and first study of our present moments. Our time
past

past is perhaps all lost from this most important purpose, the time to come may not be ours; the present moment, then, may fix our everlasting fates. Why should even oppression and poverty, with all their black train of attendants, cold, hunger, nakedness, and want of all things that can render life comfortable, Why should even these prove any longer the unhappy temptations to forget or neglect our everlasting all, our one thing needful? Will you still object your children? What shall come of the rising generation? Thousands of us are neither able to feed nor cloath, nor educate, nor give them callings; and we are dreadfully afraid lest their bodily wants shall impel them to impious, to dangerous, to criminal courses; and our extreme poverty and incapacity to do them justice, weakens our authority, and makes them to disdain our counsels. I answer, the case is grievous, and it is mine as well as yours; but it is not without remedy. I likewise acknowledge it is too frequently the case, that the children of parents, that have little of present benefit, and less in expectation from them, do too often despise their authori-

ty, and slight their best councils. But remember,

First, That the God that cannot lie hath promised, that, if we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all these things shall be added unto us. If he who cloaths the lillies of the field in such verdure and beauty, that, although they neither toil nor spin, Solomon in all his glory could not equal them,—will he not much more attend to, and supply all our real wants, if we are not wanting to ourselves.

Secondly, If we are so crushed and born down by oppression, that we are disabled from the discharge of more than one of the duties we owe to them, and be their contempt, and obstinate carriage as much as it may, yet we are not disabled from praying for them. The more we are disabled in making provision for their bodies, the more let us wrestle with God both for their bodies and souls. If you can obtain but one request of them, let it be, that they attend the house of God, and hear what God the Lord will say unto them. And go to God, by prayer, in their behalf, and pray thus: Lord, I have abundant reason to believe that my dear children

children are in a state of unbelief,—help
 them, Lord, to embrace Christ by faith,—
 help to embrace him as their prophet, to
 cure their ignorance, and to teach them by
 his word and spirit,—help them, Lord, to
 embrace him as their priest, to atone for
 their sin and guilt and intercede for them,
 —help them, Lord, to embrace Christ as
 their king, that he may rule them by his
 laws, and subdue all his and their enemies.
 Give them, Lord, this gracious Saviour,
 —to save them from the Devil and all his
 temptations,—to save them from the
 world, and all its allurements and frowns,
 —to save them from the flesh, with all
 its evil motions and enticements. Lord,
 they are ready to renounce all duty to me
 as a father,—do thou, Lord, become a
 father to them in my stead, and let Christ
 be formed in them this day, the hope of
 glory. Suffer them not to give sleep to
 their eyes, nor slumber to their eye-lids,
 till they are savingly reconciled to thee
 through the dear Redeemer. Do not let
 them grow old men and women in the
 Devil's service. What, Lord, although
 they are destitute of all good, art not
 thou able to give them all they want? O
 thou great Giver of every good and per-
 fect

fect gift! What though they cannot believe, do thou help their unbelief and give them faith; what though they cannot repent, do thou give them repentance not to be repented of; what though they cannot walk one step in thy way, do thou take them by the arms and teach them to go; what though they cannot pray, do thou, Lord, teach them to pray; though they cannot profit by what they read or hear, do thou, Lord, teach them to profit; and although they can do nothing of themselves, yet they can do all things through Christ strengthening them. O say concerning them, "My grace shall be sufficient for them, and my strength shall be made perfect in their weakness." Amen. Lord, O say thou Amen.

In this, my dear friends, or in some such manner, may parents wrestle with Heaven in behalf of their children; and as opportunity offers, and their poor debilitated circumstances may permit, doing what little they can, and offering their best counsels for their suitable conduct in time and happiness through eternity. And although it should produce no hopeful fruits in your time, it may be blessed to do them good when you are gone hence, and
are

are no more in time ; and if wicked and prophane people should scoff at these serious exercises of prayer, and religious counsels, &c. in the day of prosperity and health, yet they shall not so contemn them in the hour of sickness and death.

Thirdly, It may please God that these oppressions may subside, (which so much disables thousands of the lower ranks from doing justice to their children and families, and is the source of so much ignorance and impiety ; and oft times to supply their wants, runs into dangerous and criminal courses.) Perhaps our great superiors, learning the true state and real distresses of this oppressed country, especially in towns, through decay of trade, high priced provisions, scarcity of work among labouring people, lowness of wages, shortness of leases in the country, small returns by the crops of ruined farms, bad seasons sent by the hand of Heaven for our incorrigible wickedness, to the damage of the crops and threatening their destruction, threatned frequently with an awakening sword ; all put together, amounting to a most certain indication of the high displeasure of heaven for our sins ; I say, a proper representation of our private distresses,

distresses, of which they can know little by
 a flying report, added to the knowledge
 of our public burthens, and our great de-
 pravity and corruption, in which they
 are well versant, may, and undoubtedly
 will, draw their most serious attention in
 order to our relief. The British Senate,
 for generosity and justice, is revered all
 over Europe. Its profound knowledge and
 wisdom cannot fail to discern the propriety
 of a redress, and its goodness will most readi-
 ly grant the same, upon a due and proper
 representation of our state. To the first
 and greatest of these evils, namely, Our
 extreme depravity and corruption, and
 want of a reform, the wakeful eyes of
 our most gracious Sovereign have been
 particularly attentive. Hence the royal
 Proclamation was issued for that purpose,
 inviting us back to our offended Creator,
 by every motive that could induce, either
 of terror, or by marks of royal grace and
 favour. But in the event of short com-
 ing of the so much desired effects, what
 remains but some such expedient as their
 wisdom shall approve, for putting life and
 spirit into these, by a well appointed com-
 mission, for inspection into the conduct of
 them whose business it is to give effect to
 all

all those laws enacted for such grand and important purposes.

The second evil, namely oppression, with proper means of remedy and redress, must also be left to the wisdom of the nation, however individuals may offer their sentiments to the public on these heads as means of remedy and redress, which right none can be denied, as every man has an interest in the safety, well being, and prosperity of the State. Yet the only perfect model and plan of relief must proceed from them whose office and charge it is ; nor can this on a sudden be expected, until necessary time, and due information shall produce the same.

Having therefore disburdened our griefs in a most humble and submissive manner, into the bosoms of those, who, in process of time, may hand them forward towards the seat of royal Majesty, and, in so doing, thrown our small mite into the general treasury of the public welfare, let us address ourselves to the more private concerns of our domestic affairs ; and, in the great Name of God, under all our poverty, miseries, and accumulated distresses, to apply ourselves more fervently than ever

ever to a much neglected, but most important duty, namely, The cultivation of piety and virtue in our young and tender offspring. The defects of maintenance of cloathing, of school-fees, of power and ability to give them trades, are great wants, and great discouragements among the lower ranks, of poor oppressed ones, let us aim at every point of duty; and He who meeteth those, who remember Him in his ways, will not be wanting sooner or later to relieve us; and in order to set furth the astonishing madness and folly of all those parents, (whether rich or poor,) that are more solicitous to amass much wealth, and lay up treasures and great fortunes for children on earth, than to make them rich towards God, by teaching them how to secure an interest in their great Redeemer, and lay up for themselves treasures in heaven; we will lay before ourselves (for our joint instruction and warning against fatal mistakes of this kind in future,) a most moving and pitiful relation of a lovely boy, cut off in the bloom of life from his careless parents, under the mournful disadvantages of a total neglect of all pious and religious instruction, together with the fruitless lamentations

of a total neglect of all pious and religious instruction, together with the fruitless lamentations of the disconsolate parents for the afflicting circumstances of their sad neglects, quoted from the Meditations of the great Mr Hervey.

“ Here lies the grief of a fond mother,
 “ and the blasted expectation of an indulgent father. The youth grew up like
 “ a well-watered plant ; he shot deep,
 “ rose high, and bid fair for manhood.
 “ But just as the cedar began to tower,
 “ and promised, ’ere long, to be the
 “ pride of the wood, and prince among
 “ the neighbouring trees,—behold the
 “ ax is laid to the root ; the fatal blow
 “ struck ; and all its branching honours
 “ tumbled to the dust.—And did he
 “ fall alone ? No : The hopes of his father that begat him, and the pleasing
 “ prospects of her that bare him, fell,
 “ and were crushed together with him.”

“ Doubtless, it would have pierced
 “ one’s heart to have beheld the tender
 “ parents, following the breathless youth,
 “ to his long home. Perhaps, drowned
 “ in tears, and all overwhelmed with
 “ sorrows, they stood like weeping statues on this very spot.—Methinks I see

“ the deeply distressed mourners attending
 “ the sad solemnity. How they wring
 “ their hands, and pour floods from their
 “ eyes!—Is it fancy? or do I really hear
 “ the passionate mother, in an agony of
 “ affliction, taking a final leave of the
 “ darling of her soul?—Dumb she re-
 “ mained, while the awful obsequies were
 “ performing: dumb with grief, and lean-
 “ ing upon the partner of her woes.
 “ But now the inward anguish struggles
 “ for vent; it grows too big to be re-
 “ pressed. She advances to the brink of
 “ the grave. All her soul is in her eyes.
 “ She fastens one more look upon the
 “ dear doleful object, before the pit shuts
 “ its mouth upon him. And as she looks,
 “ she cries, in broken accents, interrupt-
 “ ed by many a rising sob—she cries—
 “ Farewell, my son! my son! my only
 “ beloved!—Would to God I had died
 “ for thee!—Farewell, my child! fare-
 “ well all my earthly happiness!—I shall
 “ never more see good in the land of the
 “ living. Attempt not to comfort me.
 “ I will go mourning all my days, till
 “ my grey hairs come down with sorrow
 “ to the grave.”

From

" From this affecting representation,
 " let parents be convinced, how highly
 " it concerns them to cultivate the
 " morals, and secure the immortal in-
 " terests of their children.— If you really
 " love the offspring of your own bodies ;
 " if your bowels yearn over those amiable
 " pledges of conjugal endearments ; spare
 " no pains ; give all diligence, I entreat
 " you, to bring them up in the nurture
 " and admonition of the Lord. Then,
 " may you have joy in their life. If
 " their span is prolonged ; their unblame-
 " able and useful conduct will be the staff
 " of your age, and a balm of declining
 " nature. Or, if the number of their
 " years be cut off in the midst, you may
 " commit their remains to the dust, with
 " much the same comfortable expecta-
 " tions, as you send the survivors to
 " places of genteel education. You may
 " commit them to the dust, with cheer-
 " ful hopes of receiving them again to
 " your arms, inexpressibly improved in
 " every noble and endearing accomplish-
 " ment."

" 'Tis certainly a severe trial ; and
 " much more afflictive, than I am able
 " to imagine, to resign a lovely blooming
 S 2 " creature,

“ creature, sprung up from your own
 “ loins, to the gloomy recesses of corrup-
 “ tion. Thus to resign him, after having
 “ been long dandled upon your knees,
 “ united to your affections by a thousand
 “ ties of tenderness; and now become
 “ both the delight of your eyes, and the
 “ support of your family!—To have such
 “ a one torn from your bosom, and
 “ thrown into darkness: Doubtless it
 “ must be like a dagger in your hearts—
 “ But O! how much more cutting to
 “ you, and confounding to the child,
 “ to have the soul separated from God!
 “ and for shameful ignorance or early im-
 “ piety, transmitted to places of eternal
 “ torment! How would it aggravate
 “ your distresses, and add a distracting
 “ emphasis to all your sighs, if you should
 “ follow the pale corpse with these bitter
 “ reflections!—This dear creature, though
 “ long ago capable of knowing good
 “ from evil, is gone out of the world,
 “ before it had learned the great design
 “ of coming into it. A short-lived, mo-
 “ mentary existence, it received from me;
 “ but no good instructions, no holy ad-
 “ monitions, nothing to further its well-
 “ being in that everlasting state upon
 “ which

“ which it is now entered. The poor
 “ body is consigned to the coffin, and car-
 “ ried out to consume away, in the cold
 “ and silent grave. And what reason
 “ have I to suppose, that the precious
 “ soul is in a better condition? May I
 “ not justly fear, that, sentenced by the
 “ righteous Judge, it is going, or gone
 “ away into the pains of endless punish-
 “ ment?—Perhaps, while I am bewailing
 “ its untimely departure; it may be cur-
 “ sing, in utter darkness, that ever to be
 “ deplored, that most calamitous day,
 “ when it was born of such a careless,
 “ ungodly parent as I have been.”

“ Nothing, I think, but the gnawings
 “ of that worm which never dies, can
 “ equal the anguish of these self-condemn-
 “ ing thoughts. The tortures of a rack
 “ must be an easy suffering, compared
 “ with the stings and horror of such a
 “ remorse.—How earnestly do I wish,
 “ that as many as are intrusted with the
 “ management of children, would take
 “ timely care to prevent these scourges of
 “ conscience; by endeavouring to con-
 “ duct their minds into an early know-
 “ ledge of Christ, and a cordial love of
 “ his truth.”

“ On this hand is lodged one, whose
 “ sepulchral stone tells a most pitiful tale
 “ indeed ! Well may the little images,
 “ reclined over the sleeping ashes, hang
 “ down their heads with that pensive air !
 “ None can consider so mournful a story,
 “ without feeling some touches of sym-
 “ pathising concern.— His age twenty-
 “ eight ; his death sudden ; himself cut
 “ down in the prime of life, amidst all
 “ the vivacity and vigour of manhood ;
 “ while his breasts were full of milk, and
 “ his bones moistened with marrow. Pro-
 “ bably he entertained no apprehensions
 “ of the evil hour. And indeed, who
 “ could have suspected, that so bright a
 “ sun should go down at noon ? To hu-
 “ man appearance his hill stood strong.
 “ Length of days seemed written in his
 “ sanguine countenance. He solaced
 “ himself with the prospect of a long,
 “ long series of earthly satisfactions —
 “ When, lo ! an unexpected stroke de-
 “ scends from that mighty arm, which
 “ overturneth the mountains by their
 “ roots ; and crushes the imaginary hero,
 “ before the moth ; as quickly, and more
 “ easily, than our fingers press such a
 “ feeble fluttering insect to death.”

“ Perhaps,

“ Perhaps the nuptial joys were all he
 “ thought on. Were not such the breath-
 “ ings of his enamoured soul? Yet a very
 “ little while, and I shall possess the ut-
 “ most of my wishes. I shall call my
 “ charmer mine; and in her enjoy what-
 “ ever my heart can crave. In the midst
 “ of such enchanting views, had some
 “ faithful friend but softly reminded him
 “ of an opening grave, and the end of
 “ all things: How unseasonable would he
 “ have reckoned the admonition, and
 “ how impertinent the person who admi-
 “ nistered it! Yet, though all warm with
 “ life, and rich in visionary bliss, he was
 “ even then tottering upon the brink of
 “ both. O dreadful vicissitude! to have
 “ the bridal festivity turned into the fu-
 “ neral solemnity! O deplorable misfor-
 “ tune! to be ship-wrecked in the very
 “ haven, and perish even in sight of hap-
 “ piness! What a memorable proof is
 “ here, of the frailty of man in his best
 “ estate: Look, O! look on this monu-
 “ ment, ye gay and careless; attend to
 “ this date; and boast no more of to-
 “ morrow!

“ Who can tell, but the bride-maids,
 “ girded with gladness, had prepared the
 “ marriage-

" marriage-bed? had decked it with the
 " richest covers, and dressed it in pillows
 " of down? When, oh! trust not in
 " youth, or strength, nor in any thing
 " mortal: for there is nothing certain,
 " nothing to be depended on; beneath
 " the unchangeable God—Death, relent-
 " less death, is making him another kind
 " of bed in the dust of the earth. Unto
 " this he must be conveyed, not with
 " splendid procession of joyous attendants,
 " but stretched on the gloomy hearse,
 " and followed by a train of mourners.
 " On this he must take up a lonely lod-
 " ging nor ever be released till the hea-
 " vens are no more. In vain does the
 " consenting fair-one put on her orna-
 " ments, and expect her spouse. Did
 " she not, like Sifera's mother, look out
 " of the lattice; chide the delays of her
 " beloved; and wonder why his chariot
 " was so long in coming? little thinking
 " that the intended bridegroom had for-
 " ever done with transitory things! that
 " now everlasting cares employ his mind
 " without one single remembrance of his
 " lovely Lucinda!—Go, disappointed vir-
 " gin! Go, mourn the uncertainty of all
 " created bliss! teach thy soul to aspire
 " after

“ after a sure and immutable felicity!
 “ for the once gay and gallant Fidelio
 “ sleeps in other embraces; even in the
 “ icy arms of death! forgetful, eternally
 “ forgetful, of the world—and thee.

“ Hitherto one is tempted to exclaim
 “ against the King of Terrors, and call
 “ him capriciously cruel. He seems, by
 “ beginning at the wrong end of the re-
 “ gister, to have inverted the laws of
 “ nature. Passing over the couch of de-
 “ crepit age, he has nipped infancy in its
 “ bud: blasted youth in its bloom, and
 “ torn up manhood in its full maturity.
 “ terrible indeed are these providences,
 “ yet not unsearchable their counsels.

“ Such strokes must not only grieve
 “ the relatives but surprise the whole
 “ neighbourhood. They sound a power-
 “ ful alarm to heedless dreaming mortals,
 “ and are intended as a remedy for our
 “ carnal security. Such passing-bells in-
 “ culcate loudly our Lord’s admonition;
 “ Take ye heed, Watch and pray:
 “ for ye know not when the time is.—
 “ We nod, like intoxicated creatures,
 “ upon the very verge of a tremendous
 “ precipice. These astonishing dispensa-
 “ tions are the kind messengers of Hea-
 “ ven;

“ ven ; to rouse us from our supineness,
 “ and quicken us into timely circumspec-
 “ tion. I need not, surely, accommo-
 “ date them with language, nor act as
 “ their interpreter. Let every one’s con-
 “ science be awake, and this will appear
 “ their awful meaning;—O ! ye sons of
 “ men, in the midst of life you are in
 “ death. No state, no circumstances can
 “ ascertain your preservation a single mo-
 “ ment. So strong is the tyrant’s aim
 “ that nothing can resist its force ; so true
 “ his arm that nothing can elude the
 “ blow. Sudden as lightning, sometimes,
 “ is his arrow launched ; and wounds,
 “ and kills, in the twinkling of an eye.
 “ Never promise yourselves safety in any
 “ expedient but constant preparation. The
 “ fatal shafts fly so promiscuously that
 “ none can guess the next victim ; there-
 “ fore, be ye always ready ; for in such
 “ an hour as ye think not, the final sum-
 “ mons cometh. The reiterated warning,
 “ I acknowledge, is too needful ; may
 “ the divine grace render it effectual ! The
 “ momentous truth, though worthy to be
 “ engraved on the tables of a most tena-
 “ cious memory, is but slightly sketched
 “ on the transient flow of passion. We
 “ see

“ see our neighbours fall ; we turn pale
 “ at the shock ; and feel, perhaps, a trem-
 “ bling dread. No sooner are they re-
 “ moved from our sight but, driven in
 “ the whirl of business, or lulled in the
 “ languors of pleasure, we forget the pro-
 “ vidence, and neglect its errand. The
 “ impression made on our unstable
 “ minds, is like the trace of an arrow
 “ through the penetrated air, or the path
 “ of a keel in the furrowed wave.—
 “ Strange stupidity ! to cure it, another
 “ monitor bespeaks me, from a neigh-
 “ bouring stone. It contains the narra-
 “ tive of an unhappy mortal, snatched
 “ from his friends, and hurried to the
 “ awful bar ; without leisure, either to
 “ take a last farewell of the one, or to
 “ put up so much as a single prayer pre-
 “ paratory for the other ; killed, accord-
 “ ing to the usual expression, by a sudden
 “ stroke of casualty.

“ Was it then a random stroke ? Doubt-
 “ less the blow came from an aiming,
 “ though invisible, hand. God presideth
 “ over the armies of heaven : God ruleth
 “ among the inhabitants of the earth ;
 “ and God conducteth what men call
 “ chance. Nothing, nothing comes to
 “ pass

“ pass through a blind and discerning fa-
 “ tality. If accidents happen, they hap-
 “ pen according to the exact foreknow-
 “ ledge, and conformably to the determi-
 “ nate counsels of Eternal Wisdom. The
 “ seemingly fortuitous disaster is only the
 “ agent, or instrument, appointed to exe-
 “ cute the supreme decree. When the
 “ king of Israel was mortally wounded,
 “ it seemed to be a casual shot. *A cer-*
 “ *tain man drew a bow, at a venture. At*
 “ *a venture*, as he thought. But his
 “ hand was strengthened, by an omni-
 “ potent aid; and the shafts levelled, by
 “ an unerring eye. So that, what we
 “ term *casualty*, is really *Providence*; ac-
 “ complishing deliberate designs, but con-
 “ cealing its own interposition. How
 “ comforting this reflection! admirably
 “ adapted to sooth-the throbbing anguish
 “ of the mourners, and to compose their
 “ spirits into a quiet submission! Excel-
 “ lently suited, to dissipate the fears of
 “ godly survivors, and create a calm in-
 “ trepidity even amidst innumerable
 “ perils!

“ How thin is the partition, between
 “ this world and another! how short the
 “ transition, from time to eternity! the
 “ partition,

“ partition, nothing more than the breath
 “ in our nostrils; and the transition may
 “ be made in the twinkling of an eye—
 “ Poor Chremylus, I remember, arose
 “ from the diversions of a card-table,
 “ and dropt into the dwellings of dark-
 “ ness—One night Corinna was all gaiety
 “ in her spirits, all finery in her apparel,
 “ at a magnificent ball.—The next night,
 “ she lay pale and stiff, an extended
 “ corpse, and ready to be mingled with
 “ the mouldering dust.—Young Atticus
 “ lived to see his ample and commodious
 “ seat compleated: but not to spend one
 “ joyous hour, under the stately roof.
 “ The sashes were hung, to admit the
 “ day, but the master’s eyes are closed in
 “ endless night. The apartments were
 “ furnished, to invite society, or admini-
 “ ster repose; but their lord rests in the
 “ lower parts of the earth, in the solitary,
 “ silent chambers of the tomb. The gar-
 “ dens were planted, and a thousand ele-
 “ gant decorations designed; but alas!
 “ their intended possessor is gone down
 “ to the place of skulls; is gone down to
 “ the valley of the shadow of death.”

Since then, my dear Friends, we are so-
 liable to be dispossessed of our earthly ta-

T

bernacle,

bernacle, let us look upon ourselves only as tenants at will, and hold ourselves in perpetual readiness to depart at a moment's warning. Without such a habitual preparation, we are like those that sleep on the top of a mast, while a horrid gulf yauns, or furious wave rages below; and where can be the peace, what the satisfaction of such a state; whereas a prepared condition, will inspire a chearfulness of temper, not to be ruffled by every low vexation, and create a firmness of mind not to be overthrown by the most threatening dangers; nor can possibly be rendered unhappy in the lowest deeps of poverty to which we may be reduced. I have the rather chosen to conclude my address to you on these awful topics, upon these two accounts, because, according to the inspired writings, first, There is nothing else left to distinguish betwixt a wise man and a fool, but this alone, of making it the chief business of life to make an early and suitable preparation for death. "Q
 " that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider
 " their latter end." And to the same purpose, Job tells us, "Behold, the fear
 " of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to
 " depart

“depart from evil, is understanding.” Because the poor having small interest in this world, should be especially attentive not to throw up their interest in the next. — Secondly, Because, during the short space of my transient abode in this city, and even while I write, there is not one instance referred to in the above quotations, but, in the space of a few days, happened all around me.—Infancy nipt in the bud,—youth blasted in the bloom,—several pleasant boys cut off suddenly,—manhood tore up in full maturity,—Nobles and others suddenly dropping down in the streets, without one moment’s previous illness ;—and what has happened to others may happen to us.—Death expects us every where ;—let us be wise therefore, and expect death every where.

F I N I S.

The world is a vast and beautiful one, and it is our duty to explore it and to make it a better place for all of us. We must not be content with the small and narrow world that we know, but we must seek out the new and the unknown, and we must strive to make it a place of peace and harmony for all of us.

